Congress poised to pass power reform bill

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
TUESDAY, MAY 29, 2001 ★★ 38 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 170 ₱15

Stock index falls below 1,400 level

LOCAL shares yesterday ended lower, with the main index falling below 1,400 points, as another brazen kidnapping by the Moro extremist group Abu Sayyaf sent jitters through the market.

"That extraordinary event (the kidnapping) is very disappointing . . . it just seems to be test after test for the market," said Paolo Periquet, Sun Life Financial of Canada Philippines senior in-

STOCK/ A16

Roco offers 2 cents worth on kidnap

By B. Rivera and Armand Nocum

ENEMIES of the state out to destabilize the government or the country's competitors

ROCO/ A15

AKALA KO BA UBOS NA ANG MGA BANDITS NA YAN?

VAL HANDUMON

DOS PALMAS under heavy guard: There goes another resort.

PHOTO FROM NEW TRIBES MISSION WEBSITE

HOSTAGES: Reghis Romero II (left photo) and Martin and Gracia Burnham.

Sayyaf bandits back in business

DESPITE losing nearly 250 men in battles with the military in recent months, Abu Sayyaf bandits are striking even further from their usual hunting grounds to kidnap people for ransom.

The bandit group, made up of self-styled Moro independence fighters, yesterday claimed responsibility for the abduction of 20 people, including three Americans, from the Dos Palmas Island Resort on Sunday.

Dos Palmas, an hour's boat ride away from Palawan's capital of Puerto Princesa City, lies 480 kilometers northwest of the clutch of remote islands in Western Mindanao where the Abu Sayyaf usually operates.

In April last year, the group gained international notoriety by slipping across the porous border to Malaysia and seized 21 people, including several Western tourists, at the

SAYYAF/ A15

HEY, THE GANG'S all here: Abu Sabaya (top photo), Galib Andang and Khadafy Janjalani

GMA to Sayyaf: Force with force

₱100-M reward put up for capture of bandits

By Julie Alipala-Inot and Jonathan F. Ma
PDI Mindanao Bureau, **and Martin P. Marfil**

ZAMBOANGA CITY—It was the outlaw group Abu Sayyaf that abducted three Americans and 17 Filipinos early Sunday from a high-end resort in Puerto Princesa City, and as proof, its spokesperson put two of its alleged hostages on the air.

In an interview over dxDZ Radyo Agong here yesterday afternoon, Abu Ahmad Salayuddin, alias Abu Sabaya, spokesperson of the Abu Sayyaf group based in Basilan, said he and another leader, Isnilon Hapilon, pulled off the raid on the Dos Palmas Arreceffi Island Resort.

But President Macapagal-Arroyo last night was standing by her administration's "no negotiation for ransom" policy.

Speaking on nationwide television after meeting with Cabinet Cluster E on the issue, Ms Macapagal said she had decided to meet "force with force" and "arms with arms."

"I'll finish what you started . . . You challenge me and I'll oblige you," she said in Filipino.

She also announced on television that the government had put up a P100-million bounty for the capture of the bandits—P5 million for each Abu Sayyaf leader and P1 million for each member involved.

"There will be no ransom," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao explained to reporters. "The only kind of negotiation will be for the unconditional release of the hostages."

Sabaya said the hostages had been divided into two groups and taken separately to Basilan and Sulu by teams led by Khadafy Janjalani and Galib Andang, alias Commander Robot, respectively.

Janjalani is holding the Americans (Martin and Gracia Burnham and Guillermo Sobero) and seven Filipinos (Raul Recio, RJ Recio, Divine and Angie Montealegre, Francis and Teresa Ganzon and

GMA/ A16

'They struck so fast . . . nobody knew what happened'

ARRECEFFI ISLAND, Palawan—"I didn't even think there was a problem. I thought it was a visit from some soldiers."

George Cervencia, a pilot of the Dos Palmas Tourist Resort, was narrating how 24 sea-borne raiders, disguised as government troops, whisked away 20 captives within a half-hour early Sunday, starting another Philippine hostage drama.

Only a few muted sounds disturbed the dawn quiet at the resort—the hum of the approaching boat, the crash of a toppled flowerpot as the attackers climbed the dock, and the clatter of guns as surprised security guards put up their hands.

Witnesses said surprise and efficiency were the hallmarks of the raid on the plush resort off Palawan Island that sparked a massive sea and air search.

Cervencia vaguely recalled awakening to some stirrings and glancing toward the noise.

The raiders drifted to the resort's dock to a welcome by two unsuspecting guards. Other armed security men, watching from a treetop lookout 200 meters away, saw nothing unusual as the raiders surreptitiously pointed rifles and whispered threats, evoking the guards' silent surrender.

THEY/ A16

Security reinforced in resorts

By Martin P. Marfil, Rocky Nazareno and TJ Burgonio

WITH the tourism industry imperiled by bandit attacks on two high-end vacation spots, President Macapagal-Arroyo has formed an inter-agency unit to secure the country's resorts.

Her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao yesterday said the unit would be composed of officials from the tourism, transportation and interior departments as well as representatives of the private sector, and would also include members of the elite anti-crime task force.

Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon is one of those recommended to head the unit, Tiglao said.

"(The unit is intended) specifically to ensure the security of the country's beach resort areas. As you well know, tourism means basically our beach resorts," he said, adding that the problem, while seemingly "big," was actually small.

"The biggest problem here is patrol boats... There are plans to increase (the Navy's) patrol boats but it will take time," he said.

The governments of the United States, United Kingdom, China, Sweden and France yesterday

SECURITY/ A16

Can animal, man co-exist in Calauit?

By Jerry Esplanada

(Last of two parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

CALAUIT ISLAND, Palawan—Aug. 31 will always be a "day of mourning" for the original inhabitants of this 3,760-hectare tropical paradise.

On Aug. 31, 1976, then President Ferdinand Marcos issued Proclamation 1578 establishing a game preserve and wildlife sanctuary on this tiny speck of land.

According to Malacañang files, this was the Philippines' "favorable response" to an appeal by Kenya for member-states of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to provide sanctuary to wild animals threatened with decimation by a raging civil war in the Tanzania-Uganda-Kenya region.

On March 4, 1977, animals of eight African species—giraffes, zebras, elands, impalas, waterbucks, bushbucks, topis and gazelles—were shipped from Mombassa, Kenya, to this island.

All the original 104 animals have since died but the offspring of the first six species have multiplied to 513. Also doing specially well are more than 1,000 native Calamian deer (from an original 30 when the project started).

The Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), which runs the Calauit project, said this gem of an island should remain a wildlife sanctuary "in the truest sense."

"And because Proclamation 1578 says so," added project manager Froilan Sariego.

But the militant Balik-Calauit Movement, composed of the island's former settlers, believed otherwise.

"Yes there are giraffes and zebras and other African animals here but Calauit does not belong to them. Calauit belongs to our ancestors, to us and to our children. Here it's the African

CAN/ A14

'This is for real; it doesn't need another take'

By Leah Salterio

BAGUIO—"This is for real and it doesn't need another take," one priest said as movie stars Aga Muhlach and Charlene Gonzales were wed in a real ceremony in this mountain city yesterday afternoon.

"How many times have you seen Aga and Charlene in this kind of setting, with different partners, but the director always shouts cut in the end," Rev. Fr. Crisostomo Yalung, the main celebrant, said at the very start of the ceremony.

An amusing moment provided a break in the solemn ceremony when, during the exchange of vows, Muhlach made Gonzales repeat saying "I do," acting like he didn't hear it the first time.

The bride is three months pregnant.

Rain fell after the Baguio wedding that was a dream come true for Muhlach, 32, one of the country's most eligible bachelors who as a boy heard Mass in the same church of St. Joseph the Worker in Pacdal.

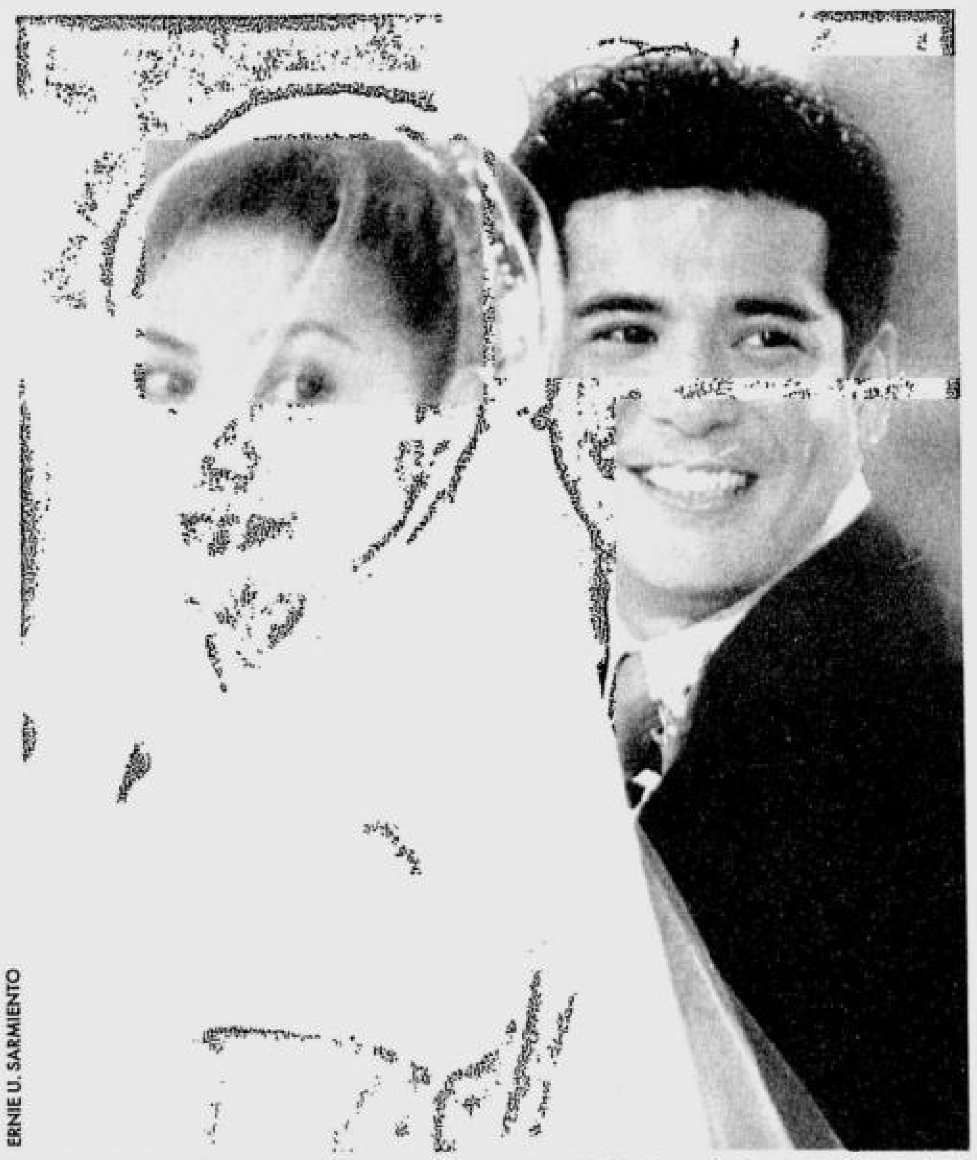
Muhlach reportedly donated P200,000 to the church before the wedding.

The church wedding was witnessed by more than 400 guests.

Contrary to reports that the groom's father would snub the wedding, Cheng Muhlach showed up in church and hugged the bride.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who was supposed to lead the principal sponsors, begged off

THIS/ A14



ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

AND THEY'LL live happily ever after, or so Aga Muhlach and three-month-pregnant Charlene Gonzales hope as they start living together as husband and wife.

Enrile closes in on Recto

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

IT WAS a tough day for Ralph Recto, who continued to hang on to dear life in 13th place but his lead over Juan Ponce Enrile and Miriam Defensor-Santiago was cut by 40 percent from some 455,000 votes on Saturday to around 276,000 yesterday.

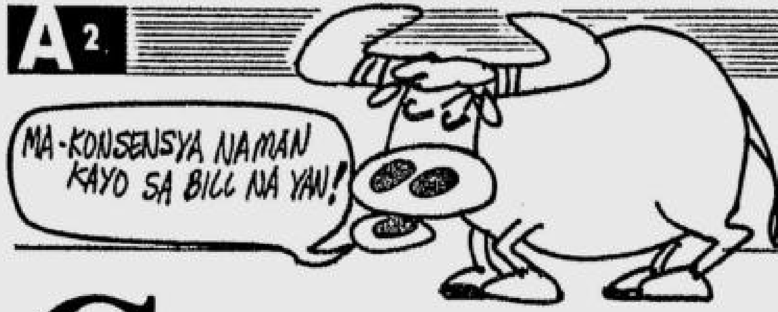
The People Power Coalition was still leading 8-4-1 as of the latest count of the Commission on Elections at 6:15 last night. But three Puwersa ng Masa candidates pulled down three from the PPC with 95 certificates of canvass (COCs) out of 102 counted thus far.

The biggest jump was made by Edgardo Angara of the PnM, who moved to fifth place yesterday from ninth last Saturday.

Angara displaced Joker Arroyo who slid down to No. 6. He was also threatening Franklin Drilon in fourth place. Drilon was leading Angara by just 52,007 votes.

Aside from Angara, two other PnM candidates moved up the rankings owing to the trouncing of the PPC by the PnM in five of the

RECTO/ A14


MA-KONSENSYA NAMAN KAYO SA BILL NA YAN!

Second FRONT PAGE

Congress looks set to pass power bill

By Christine Avendaño and Donna S. Cueto

AT THE FIRST day of a four-day special Congress session called to pass the controversial power reform bill, the signs are that the measure would get the nod of the lawmakers after all.

Following a meeting yesterday of a "technical working group" from Congress and government agencies concerned with the bill, the two groups managed to "harmonize" key differences on the measure.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, who attended the meeting, said the body was able to thresh out the issue of the recovery of so-called "stranded costs" of private distribution utilities.

Though he lamented that the matter of the bill's passage had become a political issue because of President Macapagal-Arroyo's aggressive support for it, Sen. John Osmeña, the principal author of the Senate version, said he was confident the senators would vote according to their conscience and not their politics.

At the House, Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad said he expected the House to vote on the ratification of the bill on Thursday, as they would be finalizing changes today.

The meeting of the technical working group was attended by John Osmeña, who is also chair of the Senate bicameral committee panel, his House counterpart, Rep. Arnulfo Fuentabella, as well as National Economic Development Authority and finance department officials.

Abad also attended the meeting.

14 senators attended

The Senate was able to gather a quorum for yesterday's session, with 14 senators attending.

Absent were Senators Juan Flavier, Robert Barbers, Loren Legarda, Miriam Santiago, Gregorio Honasan and Robert Jaworski.

At least 118 congressmen were present during the House roll call at the start of the session at 4 p.m. yesterday, enough to make up a quorum.

But by 4:30 p.m. most of those who raised their hands during the roll call were no longer in their seats.

Ms Macapagal has been lobbying strongly for Congress to pass the bill, which would allow the privatization of the debt-laden National Power Corp. She has been meeting with lawmakers and representatives of civil society to ask for their support.

Asked whether the President's strong support for the bill has done more harm than good, John Osmeña said that it contributed to a wrong perception that those opposing the measure were doing so because of politics.

He cited the case of opposition Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile who, he said, had already some objections against the measure even before Ms Macapagal came out in support of it.

Actual work and deliberations on the measure will start today, with much of yesterday's Senate session taken up with reconstituting the membership of the bicameral panel tackling the bill.

Guingona, Roco

This had to be done because the panel lost two of its members, Senators Teofisto Guingona, who was appointed Vice President, and Raul Roco, who became education secretary.

From nine, the panel has now seven members with Sen. Rene Cayetano being the only new addition. Sen. Vicente Sotto stepped down from the panel, so there would be an equal number of administration and opposition senators.

Representing the opposition were Enrile, Sen. Teresita Oreta and Sen. Francisco Tatad while Cayetano, Senators Serge Osmeña and Ramon Revilla were for the administration. John Osmeña remains chair of the panel.

John Osmeña admitted that he expects there would be many objections to the bill at the Senate panel, which will hold a breakfast meeting tomorrow.

He said he expects the Senate and House bicameral committee panels would start meeting this afternoon or tonight to reconcile their different versions of the bill.

He believes the two panels would clash mainly on the issue of whether the bill should include allowing private distribution utilities like the Lopez-owned Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) to recover their "stranded costs" from their contracts with independent power producers.

Losing end

"For instance, Meralco entered into a contract with First Quezon Power to buy electricity from (this firm) at a certain rate," he said. "As soon as a we have a restructured environment, electricity costs go down and when this happens, Meralco will be at the losing end because its payment to First Quezon Power would be higher than what they can collect."

The difference, he said, constituted the stranded costs.

The emerging Senate version does not provide for the inclusion of the recovery of stranded costs in the proposed bill while the House version would allow it, John Osmeña said.

But during yesterday's meeting of the technical working group, Serge Osmeña said the body was able to "harmonize" the issue of stranded costs.

Protests hound legislators

HUNDREDS of militant and civil society group members trooped to the Senate and the Batasan yesterday to put pressure on legislators meeting for a four-day special session called by President Macapagal-Arroyo to pass the controversial power sector reform bill.

The protesters brought out a makeshift electric chair with a charred Juan de la Cruz sitting on it with the placard "*Power Bill at PPA: Kukuryentihin ang Masa.*"

The Freedom from Debt Coalition warned that like the deregulation carried out in the oil industry, a privatized power industry would only result in higher and unabated electricity rate increases.

As a bicameral conference committee prepared to meet late yesterday at the Senate building, the Western Police District was put on alert for the escalation of protests in the city.

The WPD alerted its civil disturbance management unit as protesters threatened to take their picket to the United States Embassy and the areas around Malacañang.

FDC, along with Sanlakas, Akbayan, Bayan, Bayan Muna vowed that their allied forces would hound both houses of Congress to ensure that the interests of the consumers would "not be trampled upon by powerful pro-monopoly" lobbyists.

In the midst of all this, the fisherfolk group Pamalakaya expressed fears that the "capitalists" aiming to take over Napocor would "rain millions (of pesos in grease money) on both houses" of Congress to secure congressional approval for the bill.

Pamalakaya chair Rodolfo Sambajon cited the earlier alleged attempt of the Estrada administration to bribe legislators with P500,000 each to ensure the passage of the bill.

The exposé of the payola scam caused an uproar and resulted in the further delay of the bill's passage.

In Bacolod City, Sen. Sergio Osmeña III yesterday said the government will not be intimidated by the protests.

He said he would go on supporting the bill because it is good for the country as it will save it from perennial debt brought on by the "graft-ridden" Napocor.

"People need to understand why the Power Reform Bill is needed before they complain," Osmeña said.

He said those who were opposed to its passage were "ideologically convinced" that the government should subsidize everything.

"They should go to Russia if they like the communist system so much," he said.

The passage of the bill is also expected to draw a lot of investors into the country, Osmeña said.

In Iligan City, which is fast becoming a hostile hometown for President Macapagal-Arroyo, Iliganons are up in arms against her pet bill.*Reports from Andrea T. Echavez and Alcuin Papa, Metro Manila, Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau and Froilan Gallardo and Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Gloria creates body to review bill

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

TO BLUNT opposition to the controversial power reform bill, President Macapagal-Arroyo has created an inter-agency committee to review, and renegotiate if need be, all contracts entered into by the National Power Corp. with independent power producers.

One of the main reasons for the fierce opposition to the power bill is the fear that the debts that the Napocor incurred from its contracts with the IPPs would be passed on to consumers.

Ms Macapagal also hosted a dinner for House leaders on Sunday, in which she begged them to "please, please, please" pass the power sector reform bill.

The President issued Administrative Order No. 10 on Saturday, which provided for the renegotiation of those IPP contracts deemed to be highly disadvantageous to the government.

The interagency committee is to be chaired by a representative from the National Economic Development Authority, with members coming from the finance, energy and justice departments and the private sector to be appointed by the President.

The committee was given six months to complete its work and submit its recommendations to the President.

The AO said that there was an urgent need to review all Napocor contracts with IPPS/facility operators "to mitigate high electricity rates, stranded contracted costs and save Napocor from financial hemorrhage."

Take-or-pay deal

The review would cover all take-or-pay contracts or arrangements entered into by the Napocor in response to the energy crisis in the early 1990s through Republic Act 6957, or the Build-Operate-Transfer law.

The President said these contracts between the Napocor and the IPPS are "perceived to contain onerous provisions grossly disadvantageous to the government that engendered high electricity rates."

She said obligations arising from these contracts "far exceeded Napocor's ability to pay due to its assumption of currency and market risks."

She added these obligations, which had accumulated and remained unpaid, have now reached $6.7 billion.

The Napocor would act as a secretariat to provide the necessary information, data, documentation and resource persons to help the committee to perform its mandate.

The committee's life may be extended to a "reasonable period" upon approval of the President.

The administrative order was timed for the four-day special session of Congress, which the President called to ratify the power bill and approve a P10.9 billion supplemental budget.

Among those who attended the dinner for congressional leaders were Speaker Feliciano Belmonte, former Speakers Arnuflo Feuntebella and Manuel Villar, opposition Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino and members of the Nationalist People's Coalition.

In her speech, the President urged the House leaders, particularly those in the opposition, to support the power bill.

"I am counting on your statesmanship and begging each one of you to stay with us alongside the national interest in the pursuit of urgent legislation," she said.

Without the power bill, she said, the country was in danger of being left behind by its neighbors in the face of cut-throat global competition.

Gov't wants Maceda testimony on PEA-Amari

By D. Cueto

GOVERNMENT special prosecutors yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan to compel former Senate President Ernesto Maceda to take the witness stand for the prosecution in the graft case against the Philippine Estate Authority and the Amari Coastal Bay Development Corporation.

The prosecutors asked the fourth division of the anti-graft court to reconsider its previous ruling that allowed Maceda not to take the witness stand for the government because of "parliamentary immunity," since it was during his privilege speech in the Senate that he exposed the "PEA-Amari" scandal.

The court also ruled in March that what he would be testifying was "hearsay" evidence, and not based on his personal knowledge.

"The Prosecution believes that without the testimony of Mr. Maceda, the people of the Philippines might suspect that the prosecutors did not do their job well and that, there was haphazard presentation of evidence, which, surely Mr. Maceda will never countenance," the special prosecutors' manifestation said.

"It is therefore, in the highest interest of justice that the testimony of Mr. Maceda be placed before the altar of judicial scrutiny and his excuse of legislative immunity, must yield to that paramount interest of the state," it said.

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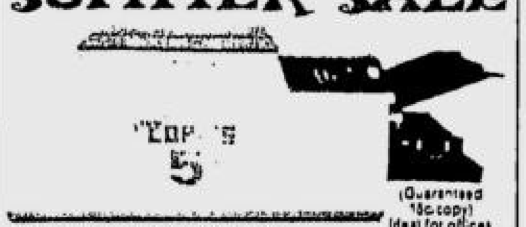

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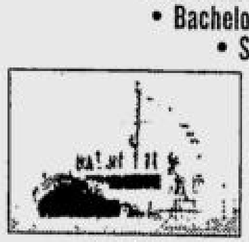
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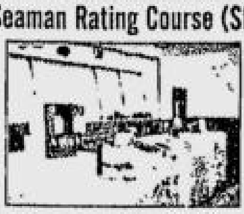
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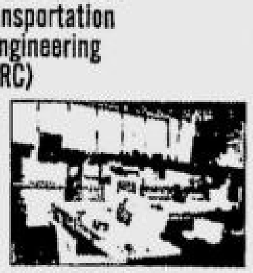
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Moro rebs ask KL to host talks

MUSLIM guerrillas said yesterday they have asked Malaysia to host the opening of talks with the Philippine government aimed at ending decades of fighting in Mindanao.

Malaysia hosted a crucial secret meeting in March between the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front and government officials that led to an agreement to resume peace talks within three months.

MILF vice chair Ghazali Jaafar said his group informed Malaysian officials last week of its preference for the opening round to be held in Kuala Lumpur, possibly next month. Succeeding rounds could be held in Indonesia and Libya, he said.

There was no immediate response from Malaysian officials, who have shown willingness to host the talks.

'Show of gratitude'

"It's a show of gratitude to Malaysia for its role in bringing us to an agreement to resume the negotiations," Jaafar said.

The MILF is the larger of two groups waging an insurrection for a separate Islamic nation in the southern Philippines. The government has ordered the military to wipe out the smaller but more violent group, the Abu Sayyaf.

The government regards its members as outlaws who thrive on kidnapping, piracy and other forms of banditry. The rebels are among those suspected in kidnapping 20 people, including three Americans, from an island resort in western Palawan on Sunday.

Jaafar said his group had no role in the Palawan kidnappings and a separate attack on a resort in Davao that killed two people last week. He said his group was open to helping look for and rescue the Palawan hostages if asked by the government.

MILF rebels have been concerned by the kidnappings and other security problems hounding President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration which could somehow affect the upcoming peace talks, Jaafar said.

Optimistic

"We're optimistic on the talks but concerned with anything that could affect the stability of the administration and ultimately the peace talks," he said.

Ms Macapagal's administration is holding separate peace talks with communist guerrillas, who are waging a Marxist uprising nationwide.

The MILF broke off talks under then President Joseph Estrada last year after he ordered a massive military offensive against the guerrillas whom he accused of attacking military positions, a southern town hall and a number of communities.

The military campaign led to the capture of more than 40 MILF camps, including its sprawling headquarters in Maguindanao province.

The military estimates the MILF has more than 12,000 guerrillas.

The Muslim separatist rebellion in Mindanao, homeland of the country's Muslim minority, has killed more than 120,000 people since the early 1970s. Some 700,000 others are also displaced by the conflict that has impeded progress in the country's most resource-rich regions that is plagued by rampant poverty. *AP*

JAAFAR

Army battalion back in Mindoro

By Carlito Pablo

AFTER more than a year of absence, the Army has returned to the island of Mindoro to resume the fight against communist rebels.

Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta said the 16th Infantry Battalion was recently deployed in the two-province island to stem the growth of the local Communist Party of the Philippines and its wing, the New People's Army.

"Their main mission is counter-insurgency," Mabanta said. "The situation in Mindoro has become alarming and that's why the Army has been brought in."

It was in Mindoro Oriental where the NPA's Melito Glor Command held captive Army Maj. Noel Buan, former intelligence chief of the Southern Luzon Command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, for close to two years.

The rebels released Buan under extensive media coverage in the rugged coastal town of Mansalay on April 6.

The 16th IB was previously brought from Mindanao to Metro Manila at the height of the anti-government protests by supporters of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada.

The battalion was attached to the anti-coup Task Force Libra and when the security situation in the National Capital Region cooled off relatively, the unit was dispatched to Mindoro.

In 1999, the government pulled out the 49th IB from the island following the involvement of its troops in the killing of civilians in the town of Victoria, Mindoro Oriental.

Mabanta noted that the 49th IB was later retrained and reconstituted as the 59th IB.

It was the 59th IB, which recovered television evangelist Wilde Almeda and his preachers from Abu Sayyaf bandits in Sulu last year.

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SC stops party-list proclamation

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE SUPREME Court has directed the Commission on Elections to refrain from proclaiming any winners in the party-list elections as party-list groups yesterday ganged up on the Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga (MAD), whose main nominee, actor Richard Gomez, appears headed for the House of Representatives.

Luzviminda Puno, the tribunal's clerk of court, said any proclamation at this time will render moot whatever actions the high court may render in the disqualification case filed by Bayan Muna and other groups against MAD and 16 other party-list organizations.

The directive was in response to a manifestation filed by the 32-member Coalition of Marginalized Party-list Groups (CPAG) seeking the postponement of the proclamation until after the disqualification of MAD and other groups have been resolved.

Based on the latest party-list canvass report of the Comelec, 10 groups have so far met the minimum two-percent vote to get a seat in the House.

These are Bayan Muna, with 15 percent; Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives, 6.5 percent; Veterans Federation Party, 5.7 percent; MAD, 5.6 percent; Alyansang Bayanihan ng mga Magsasaka, Manggagawang Bukid at Mangingisda (ABA), 3 percent; Cooperative Natcoo Network Party, 2.8 percent; Partido ng Maralitang Pilipino-Pinatubo Party, 2.3 percent; and the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino and Nationalist People's Coalition with two percent each.

But Vic del Fierro, nominee of Coalition 349 and CPAG convenor, said MAD should be disqualified even if it gets the required votes because it was a government-funded program under the Philippine National Police.

Documents obtained by the Citizens' Drug Watch, a party-list group under CPAG, showed that MAD was a government-funded program under the National Drugs Law Enforcement and Prevention Coordinating Center.

A 2000 report of the NDLEPC showed that it spent P2.1 million for local travel "mostly related to MAD launching in provinces, cities and municipalities." In 1999, documents showed the NDLEPC spent P2 million for the same purpose.

Another report signed by Chief Supt. Jewel Canson, then NDLEPC executive director, in June 2000 showed that the agency distributed of 80,000 MAD T-shirts as part of its anti-drug campaign.

MAD's nominees are Gomez and Canson.

"These documents are strong proof that MAD is a government program and thus not qualified to join the party-list elections," Del Fierro said.

Susan Ople, Citizens' Drug Watch executive director, said MAD was being questioned not for its advocacy against drugs but on the character of the organization.

"The MAD program of the previous administration was implemented by Gomez and Canson with the full backing of the PNP," Ople said.

"They were actually appointed and paid salaries by the government to launch this program," she added.

Gomez in a recent news conference lashed out at groups opposed to MAD as "anti anti-drugs," but Ople said MAD should be mad at the Comelec because it failed to resolve the disqualification petition before Election Day.

"It was downright irresponsible for the Comelec to leave all these pending until after elections thus compromising the outcome of the party-list race," Ople said.

Jinggoy asks Sandigan: Exclude me from plunder

By Donna S. Cueto

"COUNT me out."

San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan to exclude him from the plunder case filed against his father, former President Joseph Estrada, because the "amended information" filed in court did not contain "specific allegations" that he had amassed "ill-gotten wealth" of at least P50 million.

"Clearly there are no allegations in the amended information that Mayor Estrada participated in a 'pattern of overt or criminal acts indicative of the overall scheme or conspiracy to commit plunder,'" said the urgent motion and manifestation filed by his lawyer Jose Flaminiano.

"And the evidence adduced against him in the preliminary investigation does not sustain a (similar) finding..." it continued.

The younger Estrada had applied for bail in a motion filed April 30, 2001. He has been charged along with his father in the alleged collection of illegal gambling payoffs amounting to millions of pesos, as well as lesser charges.

Flaminiano said the San Juan mayor has to get out of jail to attend to his duties and to prepare for the transfer of power to his successor, his half-brother JV Ejercito.

"He has to prepare for an orderly turnover of his office to his successor. He has to secure clearances from various offices and this process may take several days to complete," the manifestation said.

Yesterday, the Sandiganbayan directed Philippine National Police Director General Leandro Mendoza to produce former President Estrada in court on May 31 for the arraignment and pre-trial of his perjury case which will start at 8:30 a.m. The perjury case is aside from the plunder and graft cases he is facing.

And in another motion filed with the Sandiganbayan, Flaminiano and Rene Saguisag, another Estrada lawyer, asked the graft court yesterday to consider detaining the deposed leader and his son at a resthouse the family owns in Tanay, Rizal.

Instead of flying the Estradas back to their Sta. Rosa, Laguna detention bungalow after their treatment at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, the lawyers said the court should consider the Tanay resthouse as a "temporary detention site."

The lawyers' five-page manifestation said this would be while they await resolution of their motion to have the Estradas placed under "more permanent" house arrest at their Greenhills, San Juan home.

The resthouse is across the road from a military camp, Camp Capinpin, said Saguisag and Flaminiano.

They said a "transfer" to Tanay, even if temporary, "should alleviate the condition of the Estradas' guards who are scattered all over the VMMC grounds sleeping on hammocks."

The resthouse has barracks for the guards, they said.

The move would also be good for the defense lawyers since Tanay is nearer the Sandiganbayan, where the trial is expected to be held, than Fort Sto. Domingo, the police camp in Sta. Rosa where the two were previously held.

And the government would not have to spend a single centavo for the Estradas' detention, the lawyers added.

"The use of their own house means government would not have to construct and maintain a dwelling, while at the same time, restricting the Estradas' freedom of movement, which is the point," the manifestation read. *With Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Senate neophytes: Will they make a difference?

By Armand Nocum

WHO will shine and who will simply be taking up space?

Senate officials said they are eagerly awaiting the arrival of the new senators to the 12th Congress to see who will make a difference and who will simply be sitting quietly through the sessions.

"Most of the incoming senators appear headed for the committee on silence," joked a top Senate official who said at least five new senators look like they might belong on the notorious panel.

Provided there are no major changes in the list of winners, the officials said they foresee less fire in chamber debates after firebrands shall have bowed out of the Senate. Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Miriam Defensor-Santiago are in the fringes of the winning circle of the recent senatorial race and are in danger of losing their seats. Sen. Francisco Tatad has run out his third term in the chamber.

But, they said, they are looking forward to fiery debates between senator-elect Joker Arroyo of the People Power Coalition and whoever would dare to face him.

"He will be the redeeming factor in the Senate. He will be an asset to the chamber," said another senior Senate official.

Understandably, the Senate officials insisted on anonymity.

The officials said Arroyo should feel right at home in the Senate's blue ribbon committee, which investigates graft and corruption. Arroyo was known as a no-nonsense graftbuster in the House of Representatives.

Apart from Arroyo, the other Senate newcomers are Noli de Castro, Manuel Villar, Francis Pangilinan, Panfilo Lacson, Loi Ejercito and Ralph Recto.

The Senate officials said they would like to see how election topnotcher De Castro would live up to the expectations of the more than 13 million people who voted for him.

"He is facing a tough challenge to convince people that they did not waste their votes on him," said one official.

They recalled that Sen. Loren Legarda, another television broadcaster who topped the previous elections, was under the same pressure to prove her voters' right.

"She succeeded in making a very good impression in her first few years," said a Senate official, recalling how Legarda shone during the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada.

Tatad, the outgoing majority leader, noted how the composition of the Senate has changed, from the time senators were "senior in age, in wisdom and in dignity."

"Now the senators are getting younger and their backgrounds more varied," he said.

He noted that if the senators of old were to run today, they would not stand a chance against the modern candidates who are created by the media.

"Media creates the reality," he said, even if those popular enough to be elected are not "very familiar with the workings of the Senate."

PPC files fraud raps vs Samar teachers

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE PEOPLE Power Coalition yesterday formally filed charges of falsification of documents against 33 teachers, municipal employees and local candidates of San Isidro town in Northern Samar who allegedly tampered with the ballots to seal the victory of opposition candidates in the region.

The PPC, represented by Eastern Samar coordinator Emil Ong, filed the charge at the Department of Justice yesterday. The coalition is still preparing the administrative charges against the Board of Election Inspectors for the alleged fraud.

Ong, who came to the Department of Education, Culture and Sports yesterday, also urged Education Secretary Raul Roco to impose "higher sanctions" against the public school teachers included in the complaint.

Roco, however, had earlier said the DECS would stand by its teachers in case of election-related legal tussles and even warned political parties filing suits against the BEI to make sure that they have strong evidence," because the DECS would assist the teachers.

The PPC had accused board canvassers Juchita Collamar-Sy, Eugenio Jumadiao and Gilda Bulalaque; local candidates Roldan Sabayo, Paul Montecalvo, Nardito Calipos, and Arnel Castillo of conspiring and confederating to commit falsification of public documents.

Also included in the complaint were Liberal Party candidates for mayor and vice mayor, Ferdinand Avila and Victorino Ibanez, and incumbent San Isidro Mayor Conrado Avila and his wife, San Isidro elementary School principal Gloria Avila. Municipal employees Rodolfo Asuero, Fe Puazo, Liza Cornilles, PO2 Roldan Collamar, Renelda Beltran, Fe Sola, Leila Collamar-Sy, Rosalita Mahinay, Leticia Dente and Wilnie Sabatingan were also charged.

Bishops to oil firms: Give poor a break

THE CATHOLIC Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday called on oil companies to reflect on how their recent move to recoup their losses would affect the livelihood of the Filipinos, especially the poor.

Msgr. Hernando "Ding" Coronel, CBCP media director, said the CBCP is asking the oil companies to reconsider their decision to increase the prices of petroleum products vis-a-vis its "suddenness and magnitude."

"It is all too sudden and too steep. People can no longer make both ends meet," Coronel said.

Coronel said that while the CBCP could not comment on the issues regarding the proposed Omnibus Power Bill because of its lack in economic expertise, one does not need to be an expert to say that the recent round of oil price increase would mean more difficult times for the poor folk.

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Lacson asks DOJ to stop probe of raps

By Rocky Nazareno

SENATORIAL candidate and former Philippine National Police chief Panfilo Lacson has asked the Department of Justice to stop investigating the kidnapping and murder charges filed against him by a former asset of the now-defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force.

Lacson's lawyer, Sigfrid Fortun, filed a request for a freeze order yesterday before the DOJ a few hours before the panel of Senior State Prosecutor Leo Dacera III could deny his motion questioning the authority of the DOJ to conduct the investigation.

"If the court doesn't grant our request, we can elevate the case to the Court of Appeals," he told reporters after the preliminary investigation.

The move was perceived as another dilatory tactic by Lacson's lawyer since the government prosecutors will be stymied by any move to elevate the case to the Court of Appeals.

Fortun said criminal offenses against PNP officials ranked higher than Senior Superintendent should be investigated by the Ombudsman and not by the DOJ. Lacson had the rank of Director.

Sole authority

"The Ombudsman has the sole and exclusive authority over these cases. This is just duplicitous," Fortun said.

The Dacera panel denied Fortun's motion to dismiss the case and consolidate this with those filed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

He cited as basis the agreement between the two agencies in October 1995, which allowed such cases to fall under the regular courts and be handled by prosecutors.

Lacson and the other accused were given until June 4 to submit their rebuttals.

"In substance, we are just being fair to everyone. We cannot do this in a piece meal manner," Dacera said.

Lacson and 12 other police officers and men of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force were accused of kidnapping and murder by a former PAOCTF asset Mary Ong and some of the victims' relatives.

GRAFT CHARGES

Subic chief cries harassment

By Michael Lim Ubac

PAYUMO

THE CHAIR of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, Felicito Payumo, branded as "mere harassment" the graft charges filed against him by a former SBMA employee.

In a statement sent to the INQUIRER, Payumo denied that he personally benefited from an "offsetting scheme" involving land leased by an investor from the SBMA in 1999.

He also accused his predecessor, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, as behind a media ploy to discredit him to allegedly cover up for the latter's illegal disbursements when he was SBMA chair.

The Office of the Ombudsman is investigating the complaint filed against Payumo by Edwin Piano, a resident of Olongapo City and a former SBMA employee.

Payumo was accused of allegedly favoring the investor, Antonio Lopa, a high school classmate of ousted President Estrada, in "offsetting" the payment for the land he leased from the SBMA.

Through his alleged lobbying for the highly irregular deal, Payumo allegedly acquired an P8-million bullet-proof Chevrolet Suburban.

Speaking through lawyer Frank Abella, the SBMA deputy administrator, Payumo said the charges were malicious, "bereft of truth and purely intended to malign" him.

Abella claimed Piano was an appointee of Gordon.

According to the complaint-affidavit, Lopa had decided to invest in the SBMA by putting up a company, Asian Armored Vehicles Technologies Corp., to manufacture armored personnel carriers for the military.

But Lopa failed to make his payments for the lease of the land for the past five years, the complaint said.

The unpaid lease rentals now amount to P21 million.

Piano alleged that for Asian Armored to avoid paying rent, Payumo made it appear that the company had offered two armored personnel carriers to the SBMA.

Estrada approved the "offsetting" scheme on Feb. 3, 1999. But Lopa allegedly failed to keep his side of the agreement.

Instead, the SBMA was given one bullet-proof Chevrolet Suburban, a luxury car which was promptly assigned for Payumo's use, the complaint said.

In his reply, Payumo defended the offsetting scheme, which he said was a "*dacion en pago*" (payment in kind) settlement. He said the SBMA normally resorted to this scheme for investors affected by the financial crunch.

Abella denied that Asian Armored promised to provide two armored personnel carriers to offset the rental payments.

"SBMA records show that what the company offered was not 'armored personnel carriers' or APCs but a bullet-proof Suburban," he said.

He added that only one vehicle—with a value of P4.9 million and not P8 million as claimed by Piano—was the subject of the *dacion en pago.*

"Only the P4.9 million amount of the vehicle was offset against the arrears of the company and not the entire arrears of P21 million," said Abella who stressed that the luxury car was being used for visiting dignitaries, prospective investors and other important visitors.

The Ombudsman has ordered Payumo and Lopa to answer the charges.

Both Payumo and Lopa were Estrada's classmates at the Ateneo High School.

The Ombudsman is also investigating Estrada's possible liability as it was he who approved the deal.

Piano said the deal violated the Anti-Graft Law, and asked Ombudsman Aniano Desierto to initiate criminal charges against Payumo with the Sandiganbayan.

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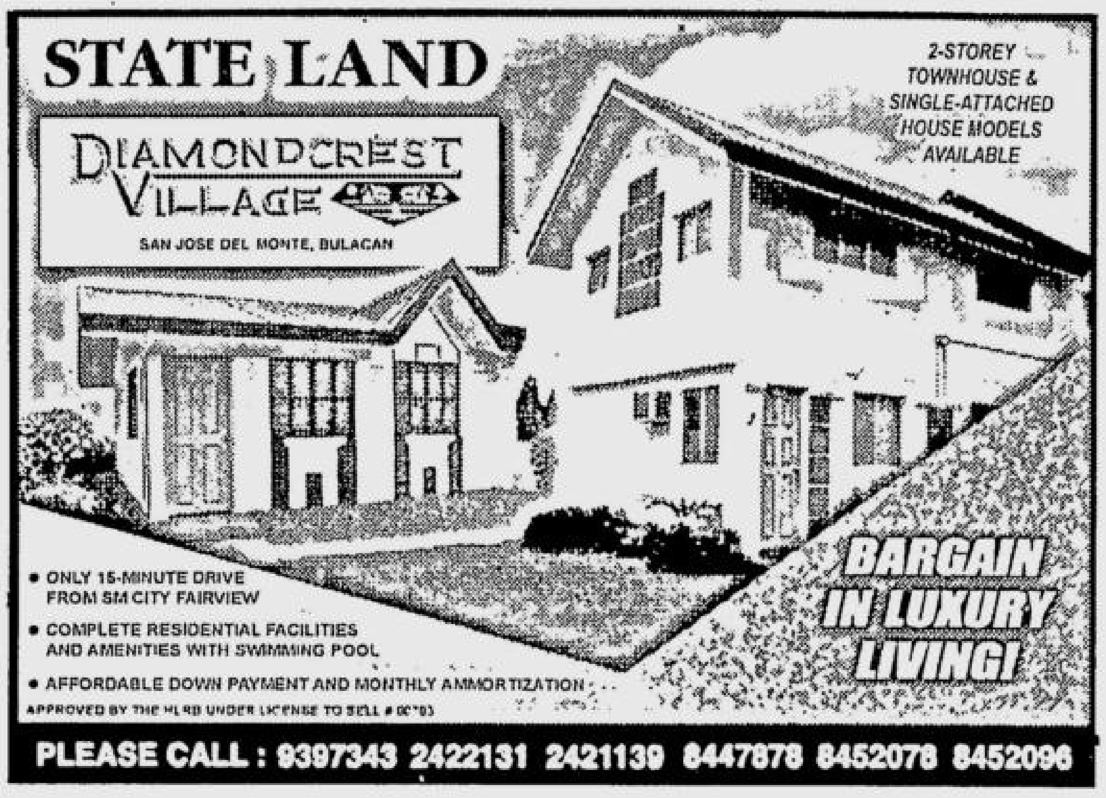

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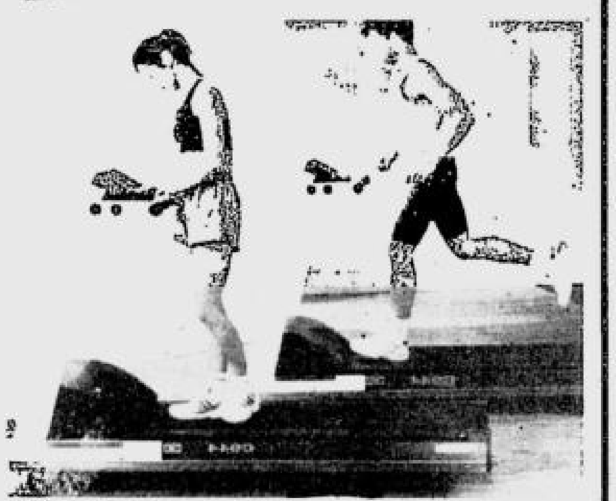

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OPINION

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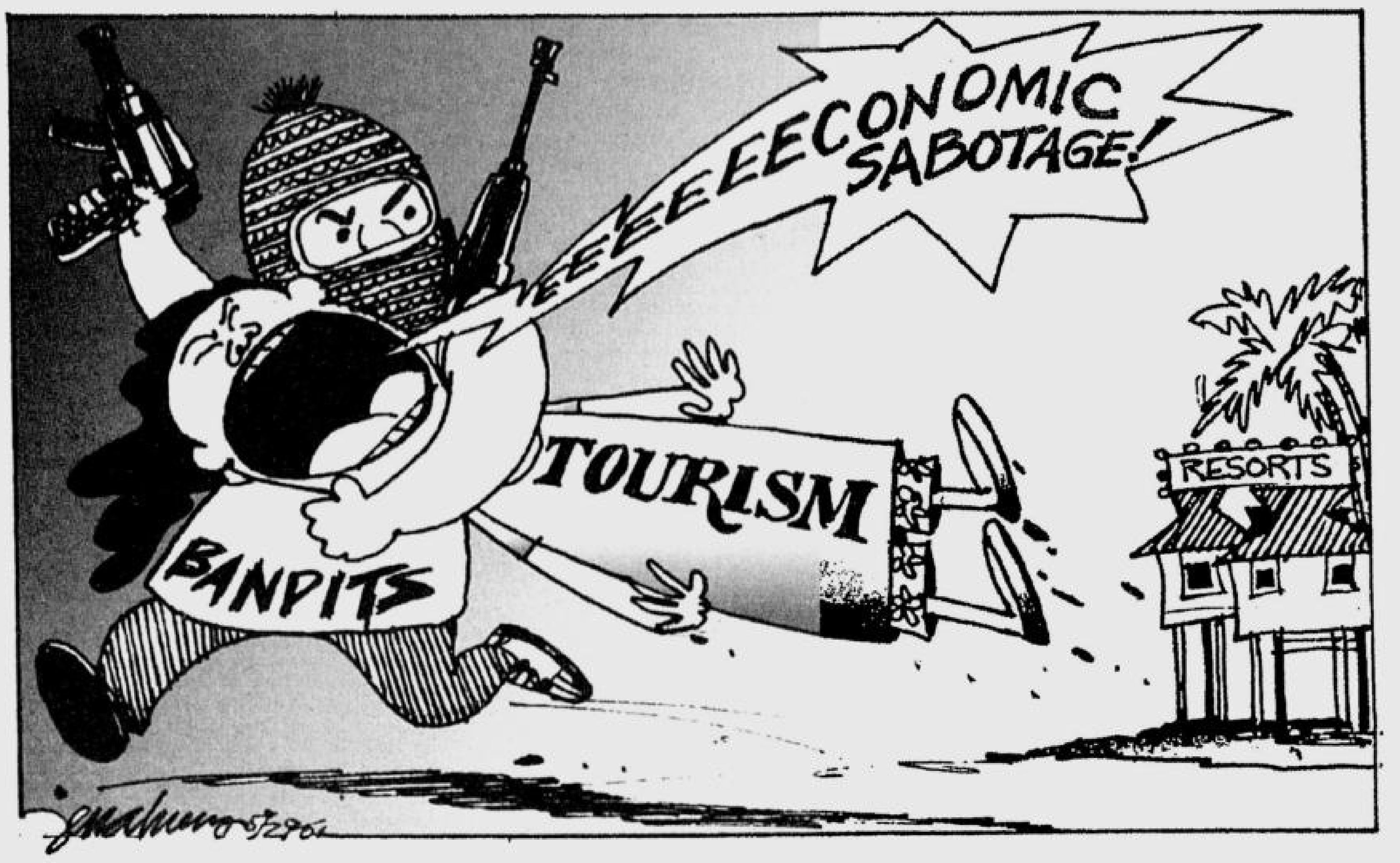

EDITORIALS

Stranded costs

IT should not come as a surprise that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has chosen the Power Reform Bill as her first major policy fight that does not involve her deposed predecessor. She may not have anticipated so much resistance from some members of the Edsa II coalition, but she has evidently pulled out all the stops to make sure that the proposed Electric Power Industry Restructuring Act is enacted into law.

By profession, she is an economist, trained in the allocation of scarce resources, and there are no resources more basic than public utilities. By vocation, she is a politician of the policy-wonk variety (something she has in common with her classmate from Georgetown, Bill Clinton). The complexity of the Power Reform Bill, about which many commentators are wary, is something she relishes. Not least, and by accident of history, she is also as familiar with the bill as many of the other incumbent legislators, having been a senator when it was first filed in Congress in 1995.

She is certainly prepared to do battle. She has called this week's special session, in an ambitious attempt to finish in four days what two previous Congresses took six years to put together. She has gone on a media offensive, appearing in slick TV commercials selling the bill as a tool for lowering electricity rates and alleviating poverty. She has reached out to her now-estranged Edsa II allies in consultations, in a bid to prove to them, if not the wisdom of the proposed law, at least the sincerity of the one who proposes to sign it.

Away from the limelight, she has also deployed her troops strategically. She has tasked Energy Secretary Jose Camacho with working out the technical details with Sen. John Osmeña, the author of the Senate version. And she has apparently reached an understanding with independent Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who says that, as far as he can count the numbers, the bill looks likely to pass the Senate. (The House version was passed last year, amid spectacular allegations by party-list Rep. Renato Magtubo of large-scale payola.)

But the costs of this policy war she has chosen to fight may be prohibitive; she might be counting the political equivalent of too many body bags all too soon.

- Many so-called civil society groups are ready to withdraw support from President Macapagal if the bill becomes law.
- The resulting fracture in the coalition politics that has buttressed the new administration thus far will undermine the administration's capacity to prosecute deposed President Joseph Estrada and his cronies to the fullest extent of the law.
- The failure to win the high-profile battle over the bill, over which she has staked her clout, may result in the transfer of lame-duck status from the outgoing Congress to her presidency.

Is it all worth it?

Fuzzy figures

SOME of Ms Macapagal's Edsa allies have used the stranded costs issue to scale the moral high ground. Stranded costs refer to what is essentially a subtraction. They are what would be left of the debts of the National Power Corp. after its assets are sold. Why let taxpayers bear the brunt of Napocor's debts?

Some officials of the erstwhile administration, now in the opposition, have meanwhile occupied the plains of pragmatism: why rush this six-year-old bill, they say, when the next Congress can take it up with more deliberation?

It would be disingenuous to claim that only those opposed to the power bill have the national interest at heart. President Macapagal has been accused throughout her government career of political opportunism, of playing it safe; surely she knows that what is at stake in the power bill is not only her chance at reelection but possibly even the fate of her fledgling administration. So why risk it? The answer must be that she genuinely thinks it's a good thing.

But we are not so sure about that. The figures do not seem to add up. Napocor's assets, for instance, are valued at about $5 billion today. What their fair value is late next year, when the sale goes through, nobody knows. It may go up, but it may also go down, thus increasing the stranded costs. The resulting firestorm then will make today's protests look like a campus torch parade.

Power bill copied from failed California model

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

NO matter what the supporters of the Power Reform Bill say, there is one undeniable fact that proves we shouldn't pass the bill: the California power system, from which we copied our power reform bill, is a total failure. There is now a severe power shortage in that state and power rates have risen three times. Why should we copy a system that is a failure?

The theory behind the California model is that competition among many companies will lower rates. (That's the same argument for our own deregulation of the oil industry, remember? Now look what it is doing to fuel prices.) So the California power industry was broken up into generation, transmission and distribution sectors and several corporations competed in the generation and distribution of electricity. Consumers were free to buy electricity from the cheapest supplier. Sounds good in theory. And power rates in California really dipped—in the beginning.

That is why we in the Philippines, always copycats, introduced the Power Reform Bill which is a copy of the California model. But what happened in California? The power companies were supposed to compete with one another to expand their share of the market. But that's not what they did. As the power demand rose, the companies did not expand. On the contrary, the power supply went down and the rates increased. It was as if the companies banded together and deliberately curtailed supply so they could raise rates. Many of the same power companies in California are the same American companies set to buy National Power Corp. units at a bargain, minus the debts incurred by those units. It is the people of the Philippines who will pay for the debts.

Now, do we want to repeat here the sad experience of California? We already had our sad experience here with the oil industry. We deregulated the industry in the belief that many oil companies competing with one another will force fuel prices down. And look what has happened. Even now, fuel prices have risen—for the nth time. And the new oil companies are not competing with the Big 3 but have joined them in raising prices. The people are angry at the increase once more and have scheduled protest marches and demonstrations that could destabilize the nation again.

What happened? The reason is that the deregulation is a sham, another deception. While there are about 60 oil companies operating in the country, the Big 3 (Shell, Caltex and Petron) control 90 percent of the petroleum market. And the Oil Deregulation Law and President Ramos prematurely lifted price controls. The Big 3, therefore, could still dictate prices as if they still had a monopoly. For free market forces to push prices down, there must be real competition among the Big 3 and the many new players. In fact, a number of the new firms are buying their refined petroleum products from the Big 3 and selling them to consumers. And because there is no government control, they can sell at any price they want.

In contrast, other countries that deregulated their oil industries, did not lift price controls until there was genuine competition among many oil firms. Japan is now on its 13th year of deregulation and it still has price controls. South Korea is now in its fifth year of deregulation and it still has price controls on oil products. But President Ramos totally lifted oil price controls after only two months of deregulation.

What is perplexing is that while President Macapagal is pushing for approval of the Power Reform Bill, she still has not certified as urgent, as she has promised, the bill creating the National Oil Exchange which is the counterpart of the Power Reform Bill in the oil industry. Both are modeled after the California power system.

But while the California power system is a failure, its oil industry counterpart, as proposed in our Oil Exchange, is better. Basically, they are the same in that many competing firms will bid to supply the electric and oil needs of the buyer. The difference is that while electricity cannot be stored and exported and imported, petroleum products can be stored for long periods and shipped long distances. That makes the oil counterpart better.

While power can be supplied by only a few companies within or near the state or country, oil can be supplied by all the refineries and traders of the world. There are at least 40 such suppliers in the world.

Simply put, the Oil Exchange will periodically bid out to the world's oil suppliers the petroleum needs of the Philippines. The Oil Exchange will then tell Philippine buyers and distributors to buy their needs from the lowest bidder. Consumers are then assured of the lowest prices in the world. That is true competition and deregulation.

President Macapagal's priorities in her claimed program to help the poor are askew. If she really wants to help not only the poor but each and every Filipino, she should hold the Power Reform Bill for further refining and certify as urgent the National Oil Exchange Bill.

I really don't understand what Ms Macapagal is doing to herself. She has embarked on a campaign to "heal" the wounds of the poor but at the same time she pushes the Power Reform Bill which is anti-poor and pro-rich, and refuses to do anything to stop further increases in fuel prices. As a result, most Filipinos are angry with her, especially the poor.

Does she know what she is doing?

Time out

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THE LOS ANGELES Lakers won't just be this year's repeat champions, they will probably be the first team in the NBA to sweep the playoffs.

That is the only suspense left in the NBA. As I write this, they've just pummeled the Spurs, 111-82, with Derek Fisher hitting hardest. That was the fourth—and as widely expected, the last—game in their Western Conference Finals. That completed the shutout. The real NBA finals have already been played out. That was the series between the Lakers and the Spurs, who are hands down the two best teams in the league. San Antonio had the best record in the regular season, only to see that nuked by the Lakers. No other verb comes close to suggesting the totality of their annihilation.

So the only question is whether the Lakers will go on to blank out either Philadelphia or Milwaukee, who are slugging it out in the East. It is not a question of whether or not the Lakers will beat them. It is a question of how they will beat them. No team in the East has the talent to beat either the Lakers or the Spurs. Not the Philadelphia Sixers which have only the monstrously talented but completely diminutive Allan Iverson to see them through. (I always think of him as a gymnast with breathtaking ball-handling skills; he did deserve the MVP, he worked for it hardest the whole year.) And he's ailing, which is why the Sixers are trailing the Bucks, 1-2. The Sixers probably have better chances than the Bucks of sneaking in a win, however Ray Allen has proven himself a worthy hoop hero.

Not even the mighty Chicago Bulls with the mighty god named Michael Jordan managed the feat of going through the playoffs with an immaculate slate. It's something the Lakers can aspire for. I'm rooting for them, of course.

What's happened to make the Lakers the most awesome team in the NBA today? Or, if they make the sweep, in all of NBA history?

The Lakers, as someone told me recently, marveling at their newfound invincibility, are pretty much the same team that has played together the last three years, often embarrassingly—as indeed they did midway through this regular season. That's Kobe and Shaquille O'Neal, the two key figures there, and the usual suspects, Rick Fox, Robert Horry and Derek Fisher, who make up the rest of the cast of the first five. Fisher's game was off and on, Horry was an aging warrior, a conscript from Houston, and Fox at one point began to settle for the role of enforcer, a role he played out badly. So what has happened to suddenly make them soar to dazzling heights?

Kobe Bryant grew up: he discovered basketball was a team sport. Seemingly the simplest thing in the world to see, particularly if you are playing with four other people, that is not so simple from the eyes of someone with enormous talent.

This year's NBA also gave irrefutable proof of that in the form of the Portland Trailblazers, the one team that oozed with talent, the one team that quite literally got the best that money could buy. That team barely made it to the playoffs, losing a string of crucial games in the homestretch. It was swiftly shown the door by the Lakers in the first round of the playoffs. But it wasn't just that they were beaten, it was also that they made complete asses of themselves on the court, giving in to tantrums (Wallace was uncontrollable) and pointing at each other when they were not pointing at the referees. "Dysfunctional" was how the announcers called them. It barely scratched the surface.

Until the homestretch in the regular season, the Lakers seemed headed in the same direction. Kobe was openly feuding with Shaquille and with Phil Jackson as to who should be the main man in the Lakers team. The Staples Center seemed too small for them, something that had little to do with Shaq's size. Abetted in no small way by ads that elevated Kobe from mere mortal to sports deity (Nike in particular made him out to be the best thing to have happened to basketball since Michael Jordan), Kobe's head was swollen. The air in Air Jordan had to do with the air underneath his feet. The air with Kobe had to do with the air in his head. The last straw, I thought, was when Kobe told reporters early this year that he was unhappy over Jackson's triangle offense because it did not sufficiently showcase his talents. The problem clearly had nothing to do with strategy, it had to do with ego. There was one difference between Kobe and Jordan: Kobe had awesome talent, Jordan had awesome talent—and character.

Kobe was the disease, Jackson was the cure. I half suspect he deliberately allowed Kobe and Shaq to feud openly and embarrass themselves on court, getting their team blown out by minor-league opponents, to teach a lesson about basketball being a team sport. No amount of scolding would have driven home the point. The best lesson is still the one learned the hard way. They did learn.

Midway through the regular season, when their prospects of repeating as champions had become as good as a desperate three-point shot thrown from mid-court, they finally began playing as a team. After a round of victories, Kobe admitted that he wasn't the big difference in LA, Shaq was. "Yo da man," he might have said. He reconciled himself to playing Robin to Shaquille's Batman, just as Scottie Pippen did to Jordan.

It wrought a startling transformation in the Lakers team. Suddenly, everyone began playing better, including the usual suspects. Fox and Horry and Fisher began making their shots, buoyed by a newfound confidence. And they became tough defenders. Iverson himself would be hard put to crack their defense at this point. And they kept getting better. How do you beat a team that gets better with every game? one sportswriter would ask after the Lakers routed the Spurs in San Antonio. Good question.

But there would be a twist in the end. Pippen would remain Robin to Jordan's Batman, Kobe would not. Sublimely ironically, it would by conquering his ego that Kobe would shine brightest. It would be by playing for the team rather than for himself that he would climb to the top of the heap. It would be by playing second to Shaquille that he would become *numero uno*. His game leaped up in all departments, taking energy from the team and energizing the team in turn. Jackson would say later that Kobe had finally learned to become a leader, someone who trusted the team and someone whom the team trusted. An awed Shaquille O'Neal would say it better midway in their series with the Spurs: "Right now, Kobe Bryant is the best player in the league."

There is a lesson there that goes beyond basketball.

Upgrade AFP facilities vs bandits

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

TWO media colleagues, the INQUIRER's Isagani Cruz and Star's Dick Pascual, took potshots at what's being derisively referred to as the "package deal" involving former President Estrada and his co-accused son Mayor Jinggoy Estrada. The columnists' thesis is that Jinggoy shouldn't be accorded the same treatment as Erap who is a former president. I feel the same way and doubtless so do many other citizens. Special treatment for Estrada can be argued due to the lofty office he once held, even if he disgraced that office. But Jinggoy has no reason whatsoever to ask for the same treatment.

* * *

Tourism Secretary Dick Gordon is gallantly trying to prevent the collapse of the tourism industry by arguing that among our 7,100 islands, the bandits have struck at only two and these are far from Manila. Thus there is no reason for tourists to skip RP, he says.

Dick can argue all he wants, but unfortunately foreign tourists won't look at it his way. All they know is that bandits struck two big resorts and kidnapped some foreign and local tourists. That's enough to scare them.

I know two people who were kidnapped in Dos Palmas: Francis and Tess Ganzon. They were with us in our pilgrimage to the Holy Land conducted by our directress Arlina Onglao, with Fr. Rene Lopez as our chaplain. Our group is praying for the Ganzons' and the other hostages' safe return.

* * *

At this point it's difficult to pinpoint responsibility for the kidnapping. Was it the Abu Sayyaf seeking to gain leverage with the Macapagal administration, or is there a political angle, with some political enemies of Ms Macapagal funding these destabilizing attacks by bandits for hire? Whatever it is, unless the government can defeat these bandits, tourism will not take off. In fact I would suggest that we rechannel in the meantime the budget of the DOT to the Armed Forces and the police so that they can upgrade their intelligence and armed capability against banditry. This should allow the Navy to buy fast boats that can compete with the bandits' superior vessels and strategically located helicopter gunships that can come to the rescue within minutes. It will also improve the intelligence and communications network in those critical areas. The bandits are striking with impunity because they know they can leave the Navy vessels behind on the high seas. Malaysia learned its lesson from the Sipadan kidnapping. We can do no less.

* * *

Our colleague Raul Palabrica, quoting an editor, had a good answer to readers who criticized this newspaper for featuring a beautiful front-page photo last Sunday of President Macapagal, ex-President Ramos and the AFP top brass participating in Alay sa Kawal (ASK) Foundation's GMA Para sa Kawal Cup at the Riviera Golf and Country Club. The critics said the paper was playing the elitist game, and was insensitive to the plight of the poor. The editor argued that the tournament was for a worthy cause: to raise funds for the benefit of widows and orphans of ordinary soldiers killed or permanently disabled due to battle injuries.

As a founding trustee of ASK, I'd like to point out several things. One is that, as ace photojournalist Mandy Navasero, who helped select that photo, put it, it was a superb shot by Joan Bondoc. Two, the President did not play; she merely drove the ceremonial ball to open the tournament, as her schedule was so tight that day. Ms Macapagal's presence, along with Ramos, the AFP top brass and leading business firms such as PAL, Shell Exploration, Petron, Toyota Philippines and Pagcor, was meant to show solidarity with the soldiers whose widows and orphans are being helped by ASK in many ways.

* * *

As I pointed out earlier, the soldiers' widows and the wives of the disabled are usually high school graduates who suddenly become solo parents who have to raise several children of school age and give them an education. ASK's assistance of P10,000 per KIA soldier's family, which we hope to raise to perhaps P15,000 or P20,000, helps them buy a sewing machine or start a little *sari-sari* store, beauty parlor or *carinderia*. The golfers may be elitist but the Cup's aim is not.

ASK is proud of the fact that it is professionally run by a board composed of prominent citizens, led by chair Edgardo Espiritu and president Ramon Pedrosa, all of whom serve pro bono. Its finances are audited yearly pro bono by Joaquin Cunanan-Price Waterhouse. In fact the auditing firm's chair, Cora de la Paz, was invited to participate in the GMA Cup and she came, as she jokingly put it, to "collect" the goodwill she has sown in ASK over the years.

* * *

In the last elections, we witnessed just about all kinds of fraud and cheating. But in Talisay City, Cebu, the candidate for the first congressional district, Napoleon Rama Jr., son of Bulletin publisher Nap Rama Sr., has a complaint that was hitherto unheard of. Nap Jr., 40, a former member of the foreign service, complained to the Comelec's legal department last May 9 about the appointment of college teachers from the University of the Visayas as canvassers and members of the board of election inspectors of that district.

What's wrong with that? Plenty, says Nap Jr. For one thing, the teachers of UV are beholden to his opponent, 68-year-old Jose Gullas, since the Gullas family owns UV. Gullas is UV president and his teachers are counting his votes in Talisay City and five municipalities. That smacks of a violation of the law as well as a lack of *delicadeza* and genuine conflict of interest.

* * *

Nap Jr. says the UV teachers' appointment is "manifestly unlawful and unjust, as it is absolutely partisan and in complete disregard of the safeguards and procedures prescribed by law." His lawyer, Michelle Angelica Go, pointed out in a brief to Comelec Commissioner Rufino Javier, who's in charge of Region VIII, that Article XIV, Sec. 164 of the Omnibus Election Code and Article I, Sec. 1, of Comelec Resolution No. 3743 provide that elementary and secondary public school teachers from the area (in this case Talisay City) should be appointed as poll clerks, and in their absence, private school teachers may be used but also from the same place. UV is located in Cebu City.

Rama says the appointment of the UV teachers was made by Corazon Moran, the election officer of Talisay, who happens to be a former scholar of UV. Moran's appointment itself, apart from violating *delicadeza*, is against the law, which says that the chief of the BEI should be a lawyer; which she is not. Nap Jr. complained to Moran several days before the election about the violation regarding the UV teachers but to no avail. The issue was also brought to the attention of Javier by Nap Rama Sr., but nothing was done. It did not surprise Rama's followers that though he was leading Gullas by 2,000 votes, after a series of brownouts that lead vanished.

What surprises this columnist is that the Gullases, a family of educators, would throw *delicadeza* to the wind and violate the law in Cebu.

Fresh talks may save Kashmir peace plan

NEWS ANALYSIS

Biman Mukherji

NEW DELHI—India's invitation for talks with Pakistan will not only throw a lifeline to the foundering Kashmir peace process, but also help alleviate domestic troubles facing the two countries' leaders, analysts said.

Domestic media said Sunday Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Pakistani ruler General Pervez Musharraf were expected to meet in July for a peace summit, which will tackle the Kashmir dispute.

Vajpayee's dramatic turnaround this week from an earlier rigid stance over meeting Musharraf, showed the Indian premier's bold ceasefire gambit in Kashmir was failing after six months, experts said. India had earlier insisted no talks were possible with Pakistan unless the Islamic state ended support to militants in Kashmir. The Indian cabinet ended the ceasefire this week while pledging to vigorously pursue peace in the strife-torn Himalayan region.

"The ceasefire India has declared produced no results whatsoever," Kalim Bahadur, professor of South Asian studies at New Delhi's prestigious Jawarhalal Nehru University, told AFP. "Naturally therefore the ceasefire had to be terminated but the peace process had to continue," he said, noting that army casualties had gone up during the period.

The latest development is being viewed cautiously by experts in New Delhi who believe the road to peace would be tortuous between the two south Asian nuclear rivals. Regardless of the outcome, analysts said the dramatic move would switch the spotlight from troubles surrounding Vajpayee's government since an arms scandal in March, when top-level officials were shown apparently taking bribes.

Regardless of the outcome, analysts said the dramatic move would switch the spotlight from troubles surrounding Vajpayee's government

"Such dramatic proposals are generally made to divert attention from domestic problems and this may also apply to the Pakistanis. In fact the general (Musharraf) is probably in much more need," Bahadur said. A thaw in the frosty relations will not only help Musharraf get more global aid but also greater international acceptability, he added.

India and Pakistan have fought three wars since the partition on the subcontinent in 1947 and came close to a fourth in 1999 when the two armies clashed for more than two months in the Kargil region of Kashmir. Two of the three wars have been over Kashmir.

Foreign secretary-level talks between India and Pakistan have remained stalled for more than two years with Islamabad refusing to discuss any subject other than what it calls "the core issue of Kashmir."

India has drawn up a list of eight subjects centering on various confidence-building measures. "The Kashmir plan of Vajpayee is unfolding itself and coming to a logical conclusion. However I keep my fingers crossed," said D. Sreedhar, an expert in South and Southwest Asian affairs at the New Delhi-based Institute of Defense Studies.

Efforts by India's Kashmir pointman, K.C. Pant, for peace talks with Kashmir separatists and militants have foundered with the majority of the groups rejecting the offer.

Pant will visit Kashmir to hold talks Monday with separatist leaders and political groups. But the leader of one of the most hard-line militant groups, Lashkar-e-Taiba, said any peace efforts would be futile.

"Indian Prime Minister Athal Behari Vajpayee's invitation to General Pervez Musharraf for dialogue in New Delhi is an eyewash, primarily meant to defuse international pressure on India," Hafiz Muhammad Saeed said. He added that dialogue could not be a solution for the bitterly divided rivals as the Pakistan army should be ready to wage war against India at a moment's notice.

Kashmir was divided between India and Pakistan at independence but remains claimed by both countries. Part of the population favors total independence. The insurgency has claimed more than 35,000 lives since 1989, according to Indian figures. Separatist leaders say that the death toll is twice as high.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training the separatist guerrillas. Islamabad denies the charge but extends moral and diplomatic support to what it describes as the legitimate struggle of the Kashmiris for self rule. *AFP*

Sociedad Economica de Amigos del Pais

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

THE FERTILITY of the country's soil has always been bruited about. Thus after the depression, brought on by the cessation of the Galleon Trade, not only the state but the church must have decided that economic salvation lay in agriculture. (It's either there's nothing new under the sun or no one's paying attention but apparently the idea has been around for nearly 200 years.) To this end an organization called Sociedad Economica de Amigos del Pais was reactivated in 1822. Originally established in 1781 by Governor General Jose Basco y Vargas, its work was interrupted by political vicissitudes of the times, including the loss of Spain's colonies in America and the Napoleonic wars.

Composed of clerics, merchants, judges, lawyers and planters, the society established a chair for agriculture in 1823. In the same year, it gave a prize for an essay on hindrances to the development of agriculture in the Philippines. (Everyone knows the answer to that one these days, so no one would bother to write about it. Suffice it to say that at this point we're importing mongo beans and rock salt!) Five years later, it carried out a survey of public lands. In 1860 it helped fund the Jardin Botanico, with an agricultural school attached to which the society contributed money monthly. Prior to that, it had contributed P500 to the publication of Padre Manuel Blanco's "Flora Botanica de Filipinas" in 1840, not the least of the reasons being the connection with botany.

In the years that followed its revival, the society awarded gold and silver medals for suggestions on how to improve agriculture. Stockbreeding was one of the society's projects. In 1827 two mares and a stallion were imported and possibly brought to Batangas. In 1866 it gave away prizes at the Batangas fair for the best mares with colts as well as the best cows with calf and the best carabaos with calf. Horse races were also encouraged and the society gave purses for that purpose. In 1838 the society advocated the setting up of a savings bank and Monte de Piedad was established with a savings department. It opened its first branch in Iloilo in 1855.

The success of Manila hemp can be attributed to an implement for stripping devised by Father Despallargues in Bicol. Its exportation begun in 1834 and machine rippers were then introduced by the society in 1843. In 1835 hemp was introduced in Laguna, the same year the society imported a machine to decordicate fiber. In 1843 Juan Marcaido received the gold medal for his studies in methods of extracting fiber from bananas. During the period, hand-made textile from the Philippines was much in demand and the industry was thriving.

Other fibers were also encouraged: silk in Caraga and cotton in the Ilocos. Cottonseeds were distributed for free. The society published handbooks on sugarcane cultivation and sugarcane manufacturing. This was at the beginning of the sugar industry in Negros. To accelerate development the society petitioned the opening of ports in Iloilo and Cebu in 1852.

But the largest prizes, ranging from P250 to P1,000, went to coffee. Paul de la Gironiere who developed that remarkable plantation in Jala-Jala on Laguna de Bay won two prizes in 1837 worth P1,500 for cultivating 60,000 coffee trees. The following year, Vicente del Pino won P750 for coffee trees bearing their second crop. In 1846 Iñigo Gonzales Araola got P2,500 for two such plantations. The government also supported the projects of the society and in 1874 Santiago Paterno was given P5,000 for his study on the coffee industry of which 5,000 copies were printed at the society's expense.

Before the invention of chemical dyes, Philippine dye woods and indigo were much in demand. A manual on indigo cultivation was distributed by the society. In 1828 a representative was sent to India to study dyeing fabrics and the expenses of eight scholars were underwritten in Manila.

The society also involved itself in cultural affairs, donating P1,547 for the UST museum in 1850 and assisting the government in sending Philippine exhibits abroad. Thus, the Philippines joined the Imperial Exhibition in London in 1851 and the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. Awards were won in both expositions.

Lack of funds was the perennial problem of the society but despite this hindrance, one-fifth of its funds was set aside for the government to use without interest for the improvement of public buildings. It also involved itself in improving housing for the poor. Three gold medals, five silver medals and five cash prizes of P100 each was given to owners of new houses that eschewed the use of nipa thatch, which was a fire hazard.

Other achievements of the society were: the production of wool, silk and shellac in Cebu, 1824; the first successful fast cotton dyes, 1824; the cochineal insect producing scarlet imported into the Philippines, 1826; rice-hulling steam-power machinery, introduced in 1836; sugar cauldrons made from Pangasinan copper, 1839; classification of 100 rice varieties in the Visayas, 1858; experimentation with 500 tea plants imported from Batavia, 1837. Perhaps it's time for the Economic Society of Friends of the Country to be reactivated for the third time.

Markings on the door

YOUNGBLOOD

Donnie M. Especio

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

Early in the summer of 1999, a cousin who was living in Albay told me he was getting married. He asked me to be one of his groom's men—a not-so-very-good excuse for seeking a weeklong vacation leave. Fortunately my understanding manager immediately granted my request.

The 12-hour trip from Cubao to Legazpi was very exhausting. But since I got to see our old hometown as well as relatives and friends, I felt it was worth it.

I also had the chance to visit our old house. It was the house that once provided our family with shelter and comfort but it was clear that it could hardly protect itself now. All I found was what remained of it after a powerful typhoon struck. Looking at the ruins, I could feel the memories rising in me like sap. I didn't see any reason to suppress it. Perhaps I just couldn't, even if I tried.

When I was a 3-year-old kid, I would stand against our door as soon as I woke up and mark my height on it. I'd be very upset upon seeing there was no change from my previous markings. Then I would turn to my mother and demand to know why I was still so small.

My mother would stare at me for a while and then ask, "Why do you want to grow tall so soon?"

"I want to be like you and Papa," I would explain to her.

Then she would patiently tell me, "Noy, we don't grow overnight. It takes time—years."

"But I ate my breakfast yesterday, and you said I would grow if I eat my breakfast!" I would insist.

My mother would look at me with a look of annoyance and say, "*Wag ka nang makulit.*"

And then I knew I had better keep my mouth shut at least for the rest of the day.

Even at that early age, I watched with both fascination and envy as people older than me did things I couldn't do. I felt so helpless. I wanted to go to school, I wanted to work, I wanted to travel, but what could I do? I was simply too young to do those things, as my mother explained.

I liked to play with other children at that age, but nothing excited me more than the thought of being an adult. "*Yung anak mo parang matanda kung magsalita,*" I often overheard our neighbors telling my parents. Remarks like this boosted my childish ego.

For a child, who worried about nothing and did nothing but eat, sleep and play, a year seemed like an eternity. Despite my endless waiting and watching, the markings on our wooden door didn't show any significant changes at all. (I guess Progress, Enfagro, Promil, and the like were not yet in the market at the time, and I suppose that helps explain why when the rice in the pot started boiling, I knew it was feeding time for me.) But still I tried to keep track of my height, innocently thinking that height was the surest indicator of a person's maturity.

As the years passed, I could clearly see the difference in the markings inch by inch. I knew I was starting to realize my childhood dream. Further confirmation of this came when my mother enrolled me in our barrio's elementary school for the next school year.

As time progressed, so did my "maturity." I began to understand life better and deeper than the markings on the door.

I was in second grade when super typhoon Sisang wrecked our house. Left with no other choice, we moved to another house. We grew up without a house we could consider our own. It was sad because I could no longer make any markings on the door (our landlord would have killed me if I did that).

After Sisang, everything changed drastically. I learned more about life. With our family living close to poverty line, my brothers and I experienced the worst life had to offer. We were so poor that all I had for a toy was a toy gun I myself fashioned from clay. Ever since that typhoon, our lives were continuously buffeted by strong winds of bad luck threatening to ruin not only our house, but also our home, our family and our future.

I didn't feel bitter about this at all, because I knew everyone had his share of misfortune at one time or another. Besides there were also peaceful and quiet moments, which I treasured although the worries never ended.

Twenty years have passed since then, and I thought the memories of my childhood had been buried and destroyed together with the old house. But staring at the markings on the rotting door which time failed to erase, I guess that memory was dear to me after all, making it worth recalling sometimes.

Now, I'm completely grown up and trying to make a living in today's fast-paced society. I continue to struggle to find my place in a world where natural selection (as Darwin calls it) seems to be the basis for survival. With endless responsibilities to fulfill, challenges to overcome, deadlines to meet, bills to pay and other problems to face, I'm not so sure if I am happy, now that I'm tall as the door itself. (I am not really that tall, but the door was really that low.)

Standing before the old house, I let go of my "strong and tough personality" (*kuno*) and allow my childlike heart to speak for me (for a moment at least). That very moment, I wished I had only seen one mark on our old door. Afraid of what the future would offer, I wished I had remained a 3-year-old kid: too young to worry about life's problems, without any hang-ups or insecurities, no moments of uncertainties and always eager and curious to see another day (without being afraid of it).

Someday that door will completely vanish, but I will carry its mark until my last breath. Like the old door, I will lie helpless in the sun, decay in the rain and then be forgotten. But that may take some time (I hope). In the meantime, I still have some marks to make.

The people who have been there for me through all these years are still around. Despite my shortcomings and insecurities, they have loved me unconditionally. By giving back the love they gave me, I wish to be able to show I have really grown up and matured. That's the mark I want to leave in their hearts, not just on a piece of wood.

But wait. Have I told you we are moving to our 11th residence, and it still doesn't belong to us?

Donnie M. Especio, 20, works with the training Department staff of American Power Conversion.

Notice to Youngblood contributors

Contributors to Youngblood who haven't received their checks are requested to inquire with the PDI cashier on Friday.

THEY SAID

History's verdict

"Who are they to challenge the verdict of history against a tyrant and criminal regime?"

—Pamalakaya chair Rodolfo Sambajon refuting deposed President Estrada's claim that election results vindicated him

Highlighting division

"It's bad enough that this animosity reigns in the hearts of our people. It's bad enough that the all-out war policy of the previous administration fanned that animosity. Definitely, it's worse if we highlighted Christian-Muslim divisions in our assessment of the Mindanao vote."

—Baicon Macaraya, chair of Rano Center for Peace and Development

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Sickening inequality in the law's application

WHEN Joseph Estrada gets sick, why does Jinggoy have to go to the hospital too? What convoluted logic would justify?

Jinggoy is not even sick or important. He is just a two-bit mayor of a small town accused of the big crime of plunder. But of course, he happens to be the son of a discredited ex-president, his co-accused.

If his being the son of Estrada is the sole excuse for sending him to the hospital when the father gets sick, then the two Edsas have been failures. For this shows that in this government *palakasan* still prevails, and that justice for the rich and privileged is truly different from that for the *masa* and the ordinary citizens.

Things have not really changed. The instigators of the Malacañang riot who stand accused of rebellion are languishing in their air-conditioned houses, while a number of political prisoners have and still are suffering in Muntinlupa jails. *Mayaman at malakas na politicos kasi ang* behind the Malacañang siege.

So after all the sound and the fury of the past three months, after all the lives lost and scarred, they all amount to nothing, zero, zilch, nada. The poor are still the cannon fodders, while the rich and privileged barons play their deadly political games safely inside their big mansions and air-conditioned rooms.

Our life cycle has been as predictable as day and night. The rich will always use and abuse the poor. The application of the law for the rich and for the poor is as different as the sun from the moon. The rich criminals go to hospital suites while the poor and common ones are held inside crowded jails.

Fair justice must be the cornerstone of good governance. In law, *dapat walang naaapi. Dapat.*

Pero baka may sakit din si Jinggoy? Cerebral *din kaya? Pati sa pagboto nangongopya pa rin sa tatay niya*!

Miriam Defensor-Santiago is right: neurologically sick *na talaga ang Pinoy. Pero ako hindi ako naaawa. Naiinis ako.* This is sickening.—**JUN PASIMIO, BF Homes, Parañaque City**

Struggle of the working poor

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo should look into the plight of the poor, particularly those among us who have been relocated from Metro Manila and have availed ourselves of the low-cost housing units outside the metropolis.

We carry not only the high cost of transportation, but also most painfully the burden of travelling from four to eight hours daily to and from our workplace usually in Metro Manila. This means, we have to be up as early as 3 a.m. to be able to get to work by 8 a.m. We can only be back home by 9 p.m., if we are lucky. If bad luck strikes, such as when there is a midnight sale in commercial centers causing hours and hours of traffic congestion, we have to make do with sleep while travelling. And then, we have to prepare for work again as soon as we reach home at 2 or 3 a.m.

Ask anyone who lives in Cavite and works in Metro Manila. Chances are you will hear "horror stories" of this kind.

And what about us, the lesser mortals who were forced to give up our jobs because we could no longer endure this burden? We have to work, work, work to ensure our day-to-day sustenance and, of course, to pay for the monthly amortization of our not-so-low-cost housing. Worse, we have to pay for the streetlights, garbage collection, street sweepers and security guards just because we live in "private subdivisions." Never mind if we are poor, local governments refuse to provide these services because the Commission on Audit does not allow the government to pay for such services in "private subdivisions."

We availed ourselves of housing units in these far-off places not so much by choice as by reason of poverty. Most of us could not afford the rentals charged for decent apartment units in Metro Manila. That is why we are here.

Madame President, we may not be ultra poor because we still can muster the spirit to keep struggling. But how much heavier should our burden be. We may not be down there but we are here and we hope she will also see us.—**MATILDE S. LIM, Rose Street, Capitol Hills Phase II, Trece Martires City, Cavite**

LETTERS

Unity in the essentials

EDSA III. Poor People Power. Mobocracy. Pro-Erap rally. Does it really matter how one calls it? More deafening than their clamor for justice for former President Estrada is the cry for justice their very presence brings. This is the justice society owes and continually denies them. It is long overdue and it should come even before mercy. Mercy without justice can go down with the Payatas trash!

Who incited them? Were they truly paid to make fools of themselves, they who live the daily drama of the widow's mite? Or was it their unadulterated conviction to strip themselves of elementary logic and storm Malacañang.

Again, how did the nauseating stench which enveloped the Edsa Shrine compare with the reeking rot of many a whitewashed tomb standing dignified in their sickening and calculated self-giving?

Who is Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo or Erap? Who is Jaime Cardinal Sin or Mike Velarde? Who is Miriam Defensor-Santiago? What is El Shaddai, the Couples for Christ or Iglesia ni Cristo? What is the KMU, NPA, or MILF? Who is Joma Sison? Has information technology so advanced as to make permissible character assassination and summary executions? Has communication networking so progressed that we no longer need to listen to each other in a dialogue?

For what did Rizal or Bonifacio offer their lives? Or Ninoy Aquino, Ed Jopson and Leandro Alejandro? Or Mark Chua?

We have to unite in what is essential for the stability of this country, to seek and consolidate that which reconciles us to God and to one another, with justice embracing mercy. As for opinions and preferences on a myriad of other matters, there is generous space for plurality, freedom and charity.—**SAL TELEG, MD, adult neurology section, Philippine General Hospital, Taft Avenue, Manila**

Talking envelopes

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

HISTORY often seems vague and distant because we have so few tangible objects from the past. There was one rare chance to see and feel history during the last week of April, when the Bank of Philippine Islands (BPI) launched a special stamp exhibit at the Ayala Museum in collaboration with private collectors. It was a pity the Edsa III turbulence broke out at that time, which may have prevented many people from catching this small but totally absorbing display of historical materials.

I hope BPI and the Ayala Museum will bring back that exhibit now that the political situation is a bit more stable. Stamps tell us many stories; in fact, Ronnie Alejandro, together with Rosa Menguito Vallejo and Arminda Vallejo Santiago, came up with a book last year called "Selyo: Philippine History in Postage Stamps," lavishly illustrated with Philippine stamps to recount our history from pre-colonial times to the Estrada administration.

What was so interesting about the exhibit wasn't just the stamps but the envelopes that carried those stamps, together with addresses and postmarks. For younger Filipinos familiar only with e-mail, I should explain that in ancient and not-so-ancient times, mail was delivered with postmarks, one from the post office sending out the mail and one for the one that received it. Postmarks give the post office's location, as well as a date, in effect, allowing the envelopes to tell stories about where they've been.

The exhibit had envelopes dating back to the 18th century, even before we had postage stamps, all the way up to the Japanese occupation during the World War II, the envelopes mutilated by the military censors (who also left their stamp).

The oldest envelope at the exhibit carried a postmark dated Jan. 27, 1797 with the words "Franca Azas," meaning stamped by Azas, Azas being the surname of the administrator of posts in Manila. An early 19th century envelope was labeled "azpeitia," meaning it was disinfected mail, rather intriguing for people like myself with an interest in public health. I suspect the disinfection had something to do with the fear of deadly smallpox.

The BPI exhibit included copies of the first stamps we issued, back in 1854. We were the first country in Asia to have such stamps. The Spanish colonial administration eventually issued more than 200 stamps but their designs were quite limited, all bearing a picture of the incumbent monarch.

Postage costs seemed quite stable through the years. In 1855, mail from the Philippines to Europe cost 1 real or 25 centavos. In 1862 it was still the same rate, which may seem like a small amount but I did some research and found out that in 1863, the salary of a mid-level teacher (*maestro* or *maestra de ascenso*) was only 12 to 15 pesos a month.

The exhibit did include envelopes showing domestic mail routes. One envelope, dating back to 1863, went from Lal-lo, Cagayan, to Binondo in Manila, with postage cost of 5 cuartos (5 centavos), again a lot of money compared to people's wages at that time.

It was clear that the postal system was mainly for the elite, but even in the 19th century, that elite was already very cosmopolitan with links throughout the world. The elite wasn't necessarily Manila-based: one envelope dating back to 1870 went from Vigan to Yokohama, via Hong Kong.

The exhibit also included envelopes with stamps issued by Aguinaldo's revolutionary government. Apparently, our first republic had an active postal service. One envelope with the revolutionary government's stamps went from Tuguegarao to Ilagan while another was sent from Dagupan to San Simon.

The Americans didn't issue stamps right away when they occupied the Philippines. American soldiers could just mail letters to the United States without stamps and have the postage collected from the person they were writing to. One envelope in the exhibit went from Cavite to Boise City, Idaho, with postage collected at the other end, amounting to 2 cents. I couldn't help wondering about what the soldiers wrote in their letters, about the Philippines and the Filipinos.

The American colonial period saw a further expansion of postal service. The exhibit had quite a few first flight covers or envelopes carried on an inaugural flight. These envelopes are historical, tracing the development not just of airmail service but of our aviation history. There was, for example, a first flight cover for the first Manila to Madrid service in 1926 and another one for the first transpacific flight in 1935 on the China Clipper.

The China Clipper flight went from Barnfield, Canada, to Manila, via San Francisco, Honolulu, Midway, Wake and Guam, all for P1.50. That was actually a lot of money considering that ordinary mail between the Philippines and the United States cost only 6 centavos. Again, take these figures in context. In 1938, the average daily wage ranged from 60 centavos to P2.20.

Airmail in those days seemed quite fast. The postmarks tell us that a letter went from Manila to San Francisco in five days, certainly much faster than what it takes these days. Airmail routes also seemed quite extensive, closely associated with US military flights. You had envelopes going by airmail from Manila to San Miguel in Tarlac, Angadanan, Isabela to Laoag, Ilocos Norte, and even from Iloilo to Dansalan, Lanao. Again, you wonder if postal service has deteriorated, rather than improved, across time.

If in the next few weeks you find yourself stranded at home because of the rains, you might want to rummage through your old files with your children or grandchildren. Dig out those old envelopes and explain the stamps and the postmarks. Better still, tell them the stories about what was in those envelopes and why you've kept them all these years.

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When (SPEX) discovered the Camago-Malampaya gas field in Northwest Palawan, it gave birth to the development of a major indigenous energy resource, the natural gas industry. The project was a major challenge, as it needed the participation and commitment from various world-class energy participants.

The Ramos administration gave the gas project a priority status and its completion became one of the key objectives of the Philippine energy plan. The plan called for an accelerated development of the Camago-Malampaya gas field. More specifically it involved the simultaneous development of the field, the construction of the pipeline infrastructure, and the setting up of the downstream facilities (essentially gas-fired power plants) to supply a total of 3000 MW. The total development cost of the gas project was estimated to reach US$5 billion.

SPEX argued that for the gas field to be viable for development there should be a ready market for the gas and the government with its resources limited by competing priorities called on the participation of the private sector.

MERALCO responded to the government's call to support the development of the gas project and committed to accommodate 1500 MW worth of electricity, which will be fueled by natural gas from Camago-Malampaya. It called on First Gas Power (a joint venture project between First Philippine Holdings and British Gas PLC) to develop the first power plant that would provide the anchor demand for the Camago-Malampaya gas development.

Like all Independent Power Producers' power contracts, the First Gas Power contract went through the accreditation process required by the Department of Energy (DOE). The contract was thoroughly evaluated and scrutinized by the Energy Regulatory Board (ERB) and subject to public hearings to assure the competitiveness of the electricity price. In compliance with the requirements of the ERB, notices were posted in each of the 111 municipalities and cities covered by the MERALCO franchise area inviting all concerned parties to attend the public hearings. It should be added that even within MERALCO, a special Board Committee was established to review the wisdom of the contract.

After three years, First Gas Power successfully closed financing for US$ 680 million in 1997 at the height of the financial crisis with financing commitments of more than US$ 4.5 billion and without any government guarantee to burden the national treasury. This milestone was the much awaited catalyst for SPEX to make its final investment decision to continue and complete the development of the gas field.

It is not true that First Gas Power is not operational. First Gas Power began testing its power plant as early as January 2000 and was in full commercial operation by August 2000. The 1000 MW power plant even played a vital role in stabilizing the country's power supply during the recent blackout.

Because of the present oversupply of electricity, MERALCO and NPC entered into a compromise agreement to ensure the optimization of all generating plants and transmission systems at a minimized cost to consumers without violating any of their contractual obligations. The First Gas Power plant currently runs on liquid fuel and has no take or pay agreement with respect to its liquid fuel supplier. This flexibility allowed MERALCO to give full dispatch responsibility to NPC until the entry of natural gas, which is expected by October of this year.

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The WORLD

Wahid allies run riot in East Java

WAHID

JAKARTA—Thousands of supporters of Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid ran riot yesterday attacking two university campuses linked to his arch foe and prompting warning shots to be fired, police said.

The university in Sidoarjo, one of at least five towns where Wahid supporters went on the rampage, is run by a Muslim group linked to the president's arch political foe Amien Rais.

Wahid's supporters, demonstrating against efforts by parliament to impeach him, raided two campuses of the Muhammadiyah University in Sidoarjo, south of the East Java capital of Surabaya.

"The damage was minimal, they only damaged the furniture in two classrooms in the first campus and pelted the second campus," said an officer at the Sidoarjo district police.

Warning shots were fired to disperse the mob at the second campus, and there were no reports of casualties, he said, identifying himself only as Anwar.

The mob later regrouped around the district parliament. East Java is Wahid's power base.

"They are still there, holding a free-speech forum," Anwar said.

As of yesterday, 31 people had been arrested over mass violence in three towns Pasuruan, Sidoarjo and Malang, the Detikcom online news service reported, quoting the head of the East Java police's operation control center, adjunct Senior Commissioner Sabur.

Wahid's supporters have accused Rais, who once headed the Muhammadiya and now chairs the national assembly, of spearheading moves to depose the president.

Several buildings linked to Muhammadiyah and the National Mandate Party (PAN) chaired by Rais have been targeted in the past few days.

In one of the latest incidents, an explosive was thrown into the home of the PAN chapter chair in Sukolilo Sunday, causing minor damage but no casualties.

In Pasuruan, thousands of Wahid supporters ransacked the local office of the Indonesian Democracy Party for Struggle (PDIP), led by Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri, which holds the largest block of seats in the legislature, the Detikcom said.

The mob then tried to attack the local parliament, but was prevented by the arrival of several local leaders of the Nahdlatul Ulama, the country's largest Muslim organization which Wahid chaired for 15 years.

A separate mob of thousands also attacked two Muhammadiyah schools there, pelting it with stones.

Muhammadiyah schools in Pandaan and Bangil were also vandalized by mobs, Detikcom said.

PDIP leaders in the lower house have led efforts to oust Wahid by calling for a special session of the national assembly to impeach him.

In Bangil, south of Sidoarjo, thousands of other Wahid supporters rallied, blocking the main toll road to the south, forcing the deployment of 400 police to block them, Detikcom said.

The People's Representative Council (DPR), the lower house, appears increasingly likely to call on Wednesday for the special MPR session to make Wahid account for his rule. A rejection of that account would lead to his impeachment.

Wahid and his allies have warned holding such a session would draw angry and uncontrollable reactions from their supporters.

Wahid on Monday ordered to his top security minister "to take the necessary actions and special steps" to overcome the crisis and restore order, security and law.

He has also cited the potential for violence to justify imposing a state of emergency if needed. *AFP*

US envoy urges Arafat, Sharon to pursue truce

JERUSALEM—The new US Mideast envoy urged the Israeli and Palestinian leaders on Sunday to implement a ceasefire and other recommendations of an international commission hours after twin car bombings rocked downtown Jerusalem.

The blasts, claimed by Islamic militants, caused no serious injuries.

But they rattled nerves ahead of the visit by US envoy William Burns, which marked the Bush administration's first foray into Israel-Palestinian shuttle diplomacy.

After Sunday's talks, Israel's Channel Two TV reported the sides agreed to resume meetings between security officials which had been suspended for months; this could not be immediately confirmed. There were also signs Israel was edging toward agreeing to a freeze on Jewish settlement building to follow a ceasefire.

The State Department had been initially reluctant to follow the Clinton administration's hands-on efforts to end the clashes that began in September, but appointed Burns on Monday after the release of a report on ending the violence.

The inquiry commission led by former US Senator George Mitchell called for an end to violence and for a series of confidence-building measures, including a freeze on building in Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.

On Sunday, Burns met with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in the autonomous West Bank town of Ramallah and then proceeded to talks with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon at Sharon's Jerusalem residence.

Israeli Cabinet Secretary Gideon Saar said afterward that the "unilateral ceasefire" Israel announced last week would continue, but that Sharon had told Burns that "this 'letting it pass' stage can't continue forever."

Saar said Burns praised Israel's restraint.

Burns condemned Sunday's car bombings and said he had urged Arafat "to do everything possible to stop such attacks."

Burns said his talks with Arafat centered on "how to implement the Mitchell report" and rebuild confidence between the two sides.

Israel had initially objected to the settlement clause of the Mitchell report, saying it would have to maintain some construction to account for "natural growth." There was also disagreement over timing—with Israel saying the confidence-building measures would have to follow a period of quiet and the Palestinians saying all the measures would have to be implemented at the same time.

On Sunday, Sharon spokesperson Ranaan Gissin said unequivocally that Israel told Burns it "accepted and adopted" the Mitchell report.

He made no specific reference to the settlement issue, saying only that the sequence of events must start with a "complete and unconditional cessation of hostilities," followed by a cooling-off period and then "confidence-building measures as the 3rd stage."

Channel Two, citing Palestinian sources, said the Palestinians had said they would be willing to accept a declaration on a settlement freeze to coincide with a ceasefire. The implementation of the freeze would be delayed while the ceasefire holds, the report said. *AP*

A-bomb 'guinea pigs' to be tested for possible cancer

SYDNEY—The Australian government said yesterday it would carry out health checks of volunteers used in British nuclear tests in the 1950s after confirming up to eight tons of deadly depleted uranium were blasted into the air during the trials.

Veterans' Affairs Minister Bruce Scott said use of the depleted uranium during the tests was identified 14 years ago, but the then Labor government failed to act on the information.

Depleted uranium is an extremely dense metal used in shells which can pierce the armor of a tank. There are fears dust from the uranium can cause cancer.

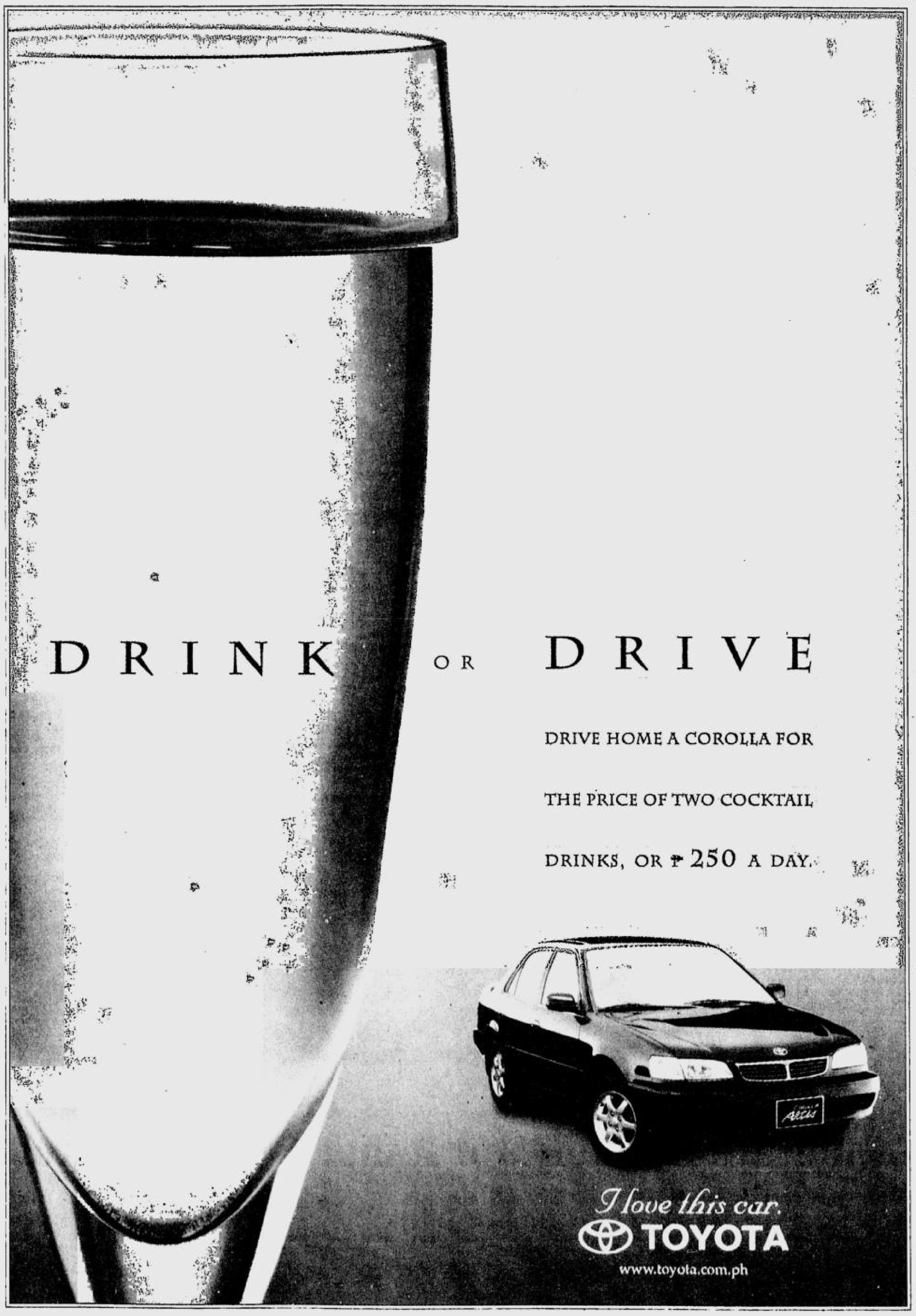
The radioactive metal has been blamed for higher rates of leukemia among Italian peacekeepers in Kosovo, and was previously thought to have been first used in the Gulf War in 1991.

Twelve British atomic bombs were detonated on Australian territory—three on the Monte Bello islands off Western Australia, and nine at Maralinga, South Australia—between 1952 and 1957.

Earlier this month, the British Ministry of Defense confirmed two dozen Australian, British and New Zealand soldiers tested protective clothing by crawling, marching or driving through a fallout zone three days after a nuclear test at Maralinga in 1956.

Scott said the government would first establish a roll call of soldiers, Aboriginal and other civilians in the testing area at the time.

The government would then conduct a health study to find out how many may have died from cancer. *AFP*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Per DTI-NCR Permit No 0583 Series of 2001

US-North Korea talks may begin next month

SEOUL—The United States and North Korea could resume talks next month despite US demands for a strict verification of North Korean arms, reports said yesterday.

South Korean newspapers said rapprochement talks between Pyongyang and Washington could take place in June while the United States is reviewing the results of past talks from the starting point.

US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly and counterparts from Japan and South Korea held talks on North Korea policy in Hawaii at the weekend.

Washington has yet to complete a review of its North Korea policy that was started after President George W. Bush took office.

Kelly said the US administration hopes to resume arms talks with North Korea, but only with more stringent verification safeguards than were in place during the administration of former president Bill Clinton.

Previous negotiations with North Korea were "very much incomplete," he said, adding that if there are further talks "verification . . . will be a very important part of anything that happens.

"That is an area that I don't think was adequately covered before," he said.

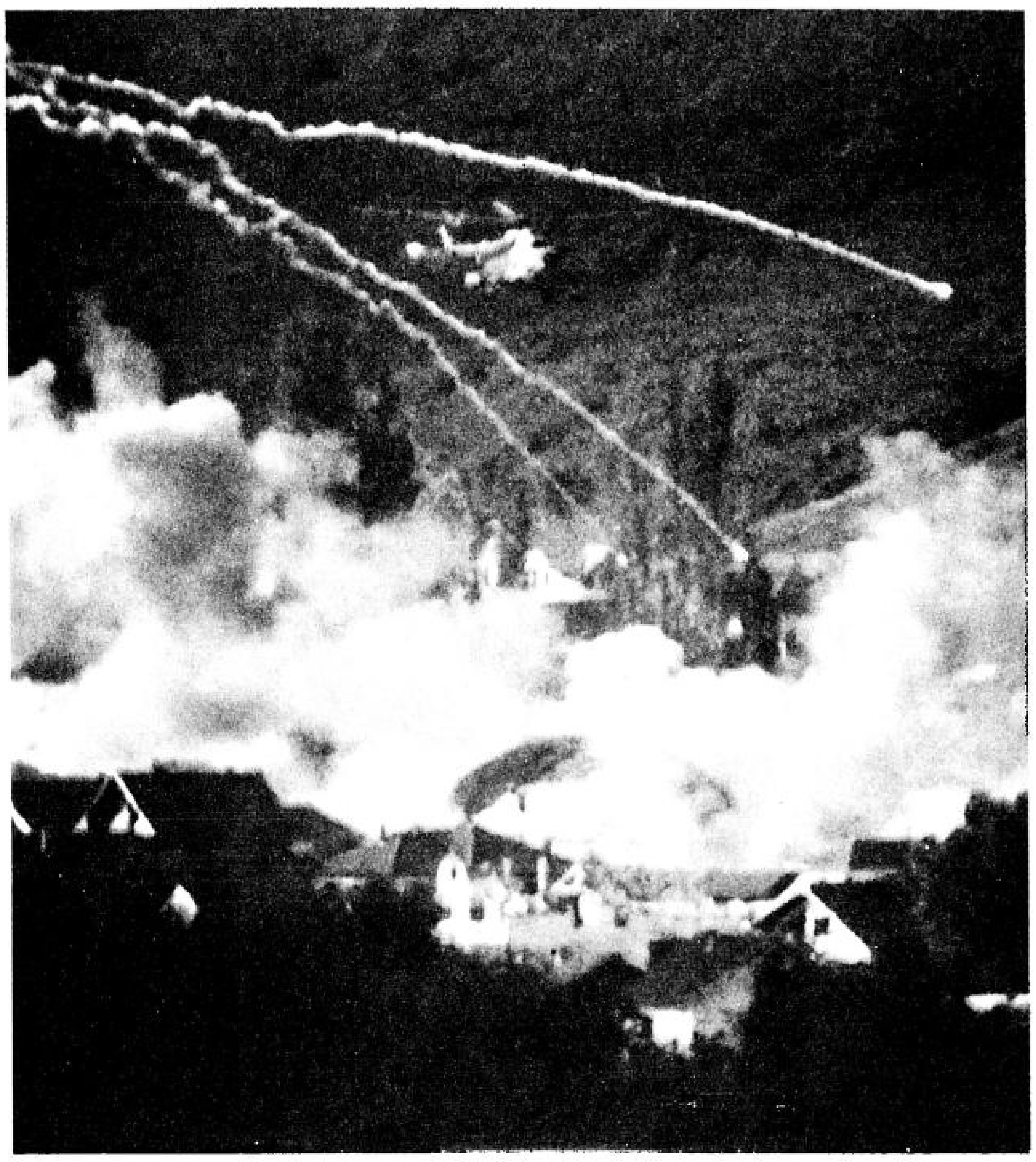
Clinton's secretary of state Madeleine Albright went to Pyongyang in November in a bid to broker an arms deal but did not gain sufficient concessions from North Korean leader Kim Jong-il.

South Korean officials refused to comment on the report. But newspapers here urged the United States to adopt a more prudent stance toward the famine-hit North.

"We cannot help but express concern over the overly hardline position toward North Korea," the JoongAng Ilbo said in an editorial.

The United States plans to demand not only a halt to North Korean missile tests and arms sales but also a reduction in conventional weapons, it said. *AFP*

Fighting resumes in Macedonia; EU leader to negotiate an end to crisis



A MACEDONIAN MI-24 helicopter fires flares after an attack on Slupcane village May 27 as Macedonian forces continue their offensive against ethnic Albanian rebels. REUTERS

LJUBODRAG, Macedonia—Fierce fighting erupted Sunday as Macedonia's Army responded to a counterattack by Albanian rebels with a renewed artillery bombardment against rebel villages in the north.

European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana will rush to Skopje on Monday in a bid to ease the crisis inside the national unity government, which is split over using such force to quell the rebel threat.

Solana, who has visited the conflict-wracked country several times in recent months, will hold fresh talks with President Boris Trajkovski, Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski and other political leaders.

"He will urge all parties to pursue and intensify efforts to restore security in the country and to achieve early progress in inter-ethnic understanding," his office said in a statement.

Sunday's fighting will have done nothing to ease tensions within Macedonia's shakey coalition government, formed May 13 to present a united front against the rebels, fighting for increased rights for the Albanian minority.

The ethnic Albanian and Macedonian Slav halves of the coalition vehemently disagree over the use of force to defeat the rebels.

Georgievski has accused his coalition partners of siding with "terrorists" after the two main ethnic Albanian parties met the rebels' political chief to agree on a "common action" to promote their cause.

Both leaders met with US diplomats in Skopje on Sunday as the international community continued to pressure them to drop their links with the rebels.

The security forces sent reinforcements to the village of Matejce as ethnic Albanian rebels broke out south from their stronghold in Slupcane, 25 km north of Skopje, and threatened to over-run a police station.

Government forces claimed to have broken the morale of the rebels by killing one of their commanders in an offensive on Friday which captured two villages, but their own problems became visible when two police commanders were sacked.

Civilians continued to flee the area during the day as the Army abandoned a unilateral ceasefire called late Saturday to allow their evacuation as tanks and artillery once more pounded Slupcane, Matejce and nearby Otlja.

Macedonian state television reported that "heavy fighting" had escalated overnight in Matejce, a village west of Kumanovo, the main town in northern Macedonia, after an attack on a police station.

A group of some 40 ethnic Albanian villagers said they had fled Matejce during the shooting. One of them said that a part of the village was controlled by the ethnic Albanian guerrillas of the National Liberation Army (NLA).

Meanwhile, an AFP reporter in the nearby village of Ljubodrag saw a convoy of around 20 armored vehicles, three T-55 tanks and a busload of policemen, heading toward Matejce.

The tanks took position in the fields near the village, opening fire around 3:30 p.m. Later artillery and tanks opened up on Slupcane too, drawing return fire from rebel mortars and machine guns.

A policeman in Ljubodrag said the convoy would reinforce some 50 officers in the station in Matejce, which had been surrounded by the guerrillas.

Until now, the village—which has a mixed ethnic Albanian and Macedonian Slav population—has been spared clashes between the Macedonian forces and the guerrillas, but several attacks on the police station have been reported.

Army spokesperson Colonel Blagoja Markovski confirmed the police station had been attacked, but denied that it was surrounded.

Markovski said that the rebels had tried to spread the fighting south after suffering "huge losses," including the death of Sabil Limani, a rebel area commander known under the nom de guerre "Tiger."

Another guerrilla chief contacted by telephone, Commander Hoxha, denied that Limani had been killed. *AFP*

China migrants fight for right to live in HK

HONG KONG—Lawyers said yesterday more than 5,000 mainland Chinese migrants have the right to live here, and some vowed to stay even if they lose their legal fight over one of the trickiest issues to confront Hong Kong since the British left.

Hong Kong authorities said the migrants will be deported if the Court of Final Appeal rejects their case being argued this week, which would split up thousands of families.

But some said they would go underground and others threatened to keep fighting if they must—though it is not clear what they could do.

"If we lose, we'll hide," said 22-year-old Tom Tong. "We'll find a hole to hide in."

Court security officials carefully searched everybody entering the court, keeping out water bottles to ensure nobody could bring in any homemade fire bombs.

The dispute over right of abode took its most violent turn yet in August, when migrants with flammable liquid in bottles set off a blaze inside Hong Kong's immigration headquarters, killing one immigration official and one mainlander and injuring about four dozen people.

"If they are violent to us, we'll be violent, too," said Chan Sia-chu, a 26-year-old electrician, who like most of the Chinese at the court yesterday comes from neighboring Guangdong Province.

Lawyers representing 5,114 mainland Chinese are making several different cases for people with varying circumstances, and it is possible some of the migrants could win while others lose.

Many of the migrants say they must be allowed to stay because they were in Hong Kong in January 1999, when the Court of Final Appeal ruled in a separate case that any person with at least one Hong Kong parent had the right to live here, regardless of when the parent attained residency rights.

Hong Kong's government warned that would flood the territory with immigrants who could overwhelm various social services, and officials here persuaded Beijing several months later to tell the court it had ruled wrongly which stirred worries that Hong Kong was surrendering its judicial independence. *AP*

New racial violence rocks English town

OLDHAM, England—A second night of race rioting between whites and Asians in the English town of Oldham died down early yesterday after hours of petrol bomb attacks and stone-throwing.

"We managed to contain the situation using zero tolerance and a massive presence. Also, the rain we have all been praying for has just arrived," said a spokesperson for the police, who used a helicopter with searchlights to pinpoint the flashpoints.

A local newspaper office was set on fire and riot police, armed with batons and shields, smashed through blazing barricades of tires to disperse rioters.

Two nights of rioting have left at least 30 people injured, 37 arrested and thrust race relations, crime, immigrant numbers and asylum seekers all high onto the agenda for Britain's general election on June 7.

The racial violence in the northwest English manufacturing

town was Britain's worst since a white supremacist's nail bomb attacks in London two years ago.

"It's Asians and whites involved in the troubles generally," the police spokesperson said.

Police said the rioting was sparked on Saturday by a gang of white youths who threw bricks at a house belonging to a Bangladeshi family.

As news of the attack spread, hundreds of Asian youths, many born in Britain to Bangladeshi families that moved from the Indian sub-continent in the 1960s to work in English textile factories, descended on Oldham's town center.

On Saturday night and into early Sunday morning some 500 youths hurled bricks and petrol bombs at hundreds of police who were rushed several miles from nearby Manchester, England's main northern city. *Reuters*

FIRE brigade officers secure the streets of Oldham from bonfires and petrol bombs during riots on the night of May 27. A second night of race rioting between whites and Asians featured hours of petrol bomb attacks and throwing of stones. REUTERS

Exoneration sought for hanged Salem 'witches'

By Steve LeBlanc

SALEM, Massachusetts—It was a time when trembling witnesses and "spectral evidence" could lead to the gallows.

But when Susannah Martin stood accused of "Sundry acts of Witchcraft" during the Salem witch trials of 1692, she defiantly laughed at her accusers, one of whom fell into a fit during the trial.

"Well I may (laugh) at such folly," Martin told her inquisitors, according to court records. "I have no hand in witchcraft."

Ten days later, Martin was hanged on Gallows Hill.

Now, more than 300 years after her execution, Martin's descendants are pressuring Massachusetts lawmakers to exonerate her and four other women caught up in the spiral of fear, recrimination, and blood that seized this town along the rocky New England coast.

"She was a woman who spoke her mind. She seemed to be quite a hardy person," said Craig Martin, 54, a civil engineer who traces his ancestry back to Susannah Martin. "Anyone who has been wrongly accused of anything . . . I can have a lot of emotion for that."

Twenty men and women were hanged or crushed to death during the witch fever, fueled by the isolation of colonial Massachusetts, a deep belief in the supernatural and political feuds.

Almost as quickly as they began, the executions stopped, just four months after the first hanging.

But Massachusetts would spend the next three centuries trying to wrest a moral out of the tale.

In 1957, the Legislature approved a resolution exonerating some of the accused witches, including "one Ann Pudeator and certain other persons."

Descendants of some of those "certain other persons" want the names of Bridget Bishop, Alice Parker, Margaret Scott, Wilmot Redd and Susannah Martin added to the resolution.

"After 309 years, they deserve the ink," said Paula Keene, a Salem public school teacher and amateur historian. "If it were me, I'd want my name written into the law."

The witch hysteria began when four young girls, including the daughter of the town's minister, the Rev. Samuel Parris, began dabbling in fortunetelling games with Tituba, a female slave of Parris.

When the girls started showing mysterious physical symptoms, the town doctor concluded they were "bewitched." Then the girls began naming people they suspected of inflicting their symptoms.

Those who were named initially—including Tituba—lived on the edges of society. In time, however, the accusations spread to more prominent citizens, including Salem Village's former minister, George Burroughs, who was named by the girls as the master of all Massachusetts witches and leader of the Salem Coven.

By the end of May 1692, 200 people were jailed under charges of witchcraft.

The first to be tried was Bridget Bishop, who had successfully fended off witchcraft accusations a dozen years earlier. When workmen repairing her home discovered "poppets"—dolls stuck with pins or missing heads—in the walls, Bishop's fate was sealed, and she was hanged in June 1692.

After Bishop, the pace of executions quickened. In July, five women, including Susannah Martin, were hanged. They were followed in August by five more.

A key to the trials was so-called spectral evidence, reports of ghostly presences inflicting torment under the command of the suspected witches.

As the executions mounted, spectral evidence came under increasing criticism. Cotton Mather, minister of Boston's Old North Church and initially a believer in witchcraft, began to speak out against it.

In September, the largest and last group of accused witches was hanged, including Ann Pudeator, Alice Parker, Margaret Scott and Wilmot Redd.

The thirst for prosecutions then waned and the use of spectral evidence was eventually rejected. The trials ended in May 1693, when Gov. William Phips pardoned all remaining witch suspects. *AP*

Dems hope more GOPs jump ship

WASHINGTON—Democrats held out hope on Sunday that more moderate Republicans will follow Sen. James Jeffords of Vermont and abandon the Republican Party, which they said had drifted too far to the right in recent years.

Sen. Joseph Lieberman, a Connecticut Democrat, said President George W. Bush "has governed much more from the right of mainstream and has been very partisan" in Cabinet selections and other matters, singling out John Ashcroft and Janet Norton, Bush's choices to head the Justice and Interior departments.

"Unless the party comes back to the mainstream and stops punishing dissent they may lose more members and the support of the American people," Lieberman said on Fox News Sunday.

Lieberman, who ran unsuccessfully for vice president on the Democratic Party ticket in 2000, dodged a question on whether Arizona Republican Sen. John McCain was among those moderate Republicans who could decide to leave the party.

"John McCain's comments are straight talk," said Lieberman, an apparent reference to the "Straight Talk Express," the campaign bus from which McCain launched an unsuccessful bid for the Republican nomination for the presidency last year.

The real question, he said, "is whether President Bush and my Republican colleagues in Congress will hear the words of John McCain and Jim Jeffords." Jeffords left the GOP to become an independent last week, saying the party had drifted too far to the right and often did not represent his views.

Sen. Thomas Daschle, a South Dakota Democrat poised to become the majority leader when the balance of power in the Senate shifts next month, said the door was open to McCain and others including Rhode Island Republican Sen. Lincoln Chafee.

"We've made it clear that Republicans and Independents are welcome in our caucus," Daschle told NBC News' Meet the Press

"I've made that clear to Senator McCain and to Senator Chafee. . . . If you are interested, we are more than happy to talk with you, There has always been an open invitation." *Reuters*

Catholic archbishop married by Rev. Moon

ROMAN Catholic Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo (left) shows off his wedding ring with his new wife Sung Ryae (Anna) soon after their wedding ceremony officiated over by Rev. Sun Myung Moon in New York May 27. REUTERS

NEW YORK—A Roman Catholic archbishop who says God wants him and the Catholic Church to shed the celibacy rule married a Korean physician Sunday in a group wedding conducted by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon.

Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo, 70, was wed in a ceremony at the New York Hilton hotel. The bride, chosen for him this week by Moon, is Sung Ryae (Anna) Soon, 43, a physician from South Korea, said the Rev. Phillip Schanker, a spokesperson for the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, the central group in Moon's movement.

He said the newlyweds plan to move to Africa.

Milingo has long been at odds with the Catholic hierarchy, although he remains based in Rome and still carries his title. The archbishop was expected to talk about breaking his celibacy vows after the group nuptials for some 60 couples.

Milingo will then issue a statement making clear that "he's not leaving the church or disassociating from the Catholic tradition," Schanker said. Moon does not require those he marries to be followers of his religion.

However, it seems likely the Vatican would take action if the archbishop goes through with the ceremony.

"I don't think I should comment on this until we hear something directly from Milingo," Vatican spokesperson Joaquin Navarro-Valls said.

Milingo was archbishop of Lusaka, the capital of Zambia, when he ran afoul of the Vatican over his ministry of faith healings and exorcisms. He resigned under pressure in 1983, a very rare occurrence with an archbishop below normal retirement age and in good health.

Milingo then was brought to Rome as a functionary in the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples, but continued public meetings of healing and exorcism. Last year, he was quietly retired from the post.

Moon's doctrines are well beyond the bounds of Roman Catholicism and the rest of traditional Christianity. For instance, the church says Jesus was divine "but he is not God," and followers regard Moon as the messiah who is completing the salvation Jesus Christ failed to accomplish.

In each of the past two years, Milingo has appeared at group weddings conducted by Moon. The rituals, called "Holy Blessing Ceremonies," are a central practice of Moon's religion. Moon arranges the marriages personally, although the spouse may also be selected by one's family or religious community.

Moon teaches that Jesus' ministry as messiah failed because of Jewish rejection and because he did not marry. Thus the "Lord of the Second Advent" must appear at the end of time and, with his wife, become ideal "True Parents." The faith teaches the second messiah was born in Korea around 1920, so the 81-year-old Moon fits the criteria.

Moon has been married twice and has 13 children. He moved from South Korea to live in the United States in 1973, and controls myriad nonprofit associations and business ventures.

His faith received bad publicity over allegedly deceptive recruiting tactics and panhandling by disciples while Moon lived in luxury. Moon blamed religious persecution when he was later found guilty of tax evasion and sent to federal prison for 11 months. *AP*

Powerful Hindu priest injured in bomb attack

NEW DELHI—Unidentified attackers hurled bombs yesterday at a powerful Hindu priest leading the campaign to build a temple at the site of an ancient mosque, injuring him and five others, doctors and officials said.

Nritya Gopal Das was injured in his legs and admitted to the hospital in the northern town of Faizabad after the attack, which took place as he was walking toward the Saryu River for his daily morning bath, said Shatrughan Singh, Faizabad's commissioner.

"He has lacerations in the legs. We have done an X-Ray and are waiting to see if there are splinters," medical superintendent Dr. A.N. Singh said.

The other five people were also hospitalized.

Das is chair of a group that has vowed to build a temple dedicated to the Hindu god Rama at the site of a 16th century mosque that was razed on Dec. 6, 1992 by thousands of frenzied activists in the nearby holy town of Ayodhya.

Das, along with three Cabinet ministers and several others, has been accused by federal investigators of inciting the crowds that razed the Babri mosque, leading to clashes between Hindus and Muslims in which 2,000 people died.

The campaign to build the mosque is led by Hindu hardline groups that support Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party. But the government says it will not let any construction begin at the site, about 350 miles east of New Delhi, until India's supreme court decides on a case related to the dispute.

The destruction was the climax of a yearslong campaign by Hindu nationalists who argued that the mosque was built in the 16th century by Mogul ruler Babur after destroying a Hindu temple. The site is said to be the birthplace of Ram, one of Hinduism's most revered deities.

India's supreme court is now hearing a string of petitions on the rival claims. A criminal court case over the mosque's destruction is still pending in Uttar Pradesh. *AP*

Polish bishops make amends for 1941 slays

WARSAW, Poland—Reflecting native son Pope John Paul II's efforts to reach out to Jews, Poland's Roman Catholic bishops made a historic apology Sunday for a 1941 massacre of Jews in northeastern Poland, and for all wrongs by Catholics against Jewish compatriots during World War II.

About 100 bishops participated in the unprecedented ceremony, led by the head of the Catholic church in Poland, Cardinal Jozef Glemp.

Polish Catholic leaders had expressed hope that what was termed an "apology to God" would be a landmark in reconciliation with Jewish groups who often accuse them of being too tolerant of anti-Semitism.

"We want, as pastors of the church in Poland, to stand in truth before God and people, but mainly before our Jewish brothers and sisters, referring with regret and repentance to the crime that in July 1941 took place in Jedwabne and in other places," Bishop Stanislaw Gadecki said in the introduction Sunday.

Jedwabne is a town in northeastern Poland were as many as 1,600 Jews were massacred in July 1941. Sunday's ceremony was prompted by recent revelations that Poles, not Nazi troops, did the killing there and in some neighboring towns.

"Among the perpetrators were also Poles and Catholics, baptized people," said Gadecki, who chairs the Polish church's council for dialogue with other religions.

"We are in deep sorrow over the actions of those who over history, but particularly in Jedwabne and in other places, have inflicted suffering on Jews, and even death. We condemn all signs of intolerance, racism and anti-Semitism, which are sinful."

The Polish church said it was "following the call and the example of John Paul II," who has sought to bring his church closer to Judaism and other faiths by confessing past sins of Catholics.

After an hour of prayers and solemn religious music, Glemp finished the ceremony by reading a prayer written by the Pope last year urging more worldwide understanding the Jewish nation.

About 2,500 mostly elderly Poles attended the ceremony in the massive All Saints' Church at the edge of the site of the former Warsaw Ghetto, where the city's Jews were herded under Nazi occupation.

Rabbi Michael Schudrich, leader of Poland's Jewish community of about 20,000 people, said the gesture had "the potential to be one more very important step" in reconciliation between Polish Catholics and Jews since the end of communist rule in 1989.

He declined an invitation to join the ceremony, however, because it was held at the beginning of the Jewish Shavuot, or Feast of Weeks. Schudrich also has bristled at suggestions by Glemp that Jews apologize for Jewish communists who persecuted Polish patriots after World War II. *AP*

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PER DTI-NCR PERMIT NO. 0485, SERIES OF 2001

Troops pursuing raiders seal off villages–MNLF

By ALLAN A. NAWAL
PDI Mindanao Bureau

MALITA, Davao del Sur—The Moro National Liberation Front decried the alleged hamletting by the military of several shoreline villages here, including those inside Bilal, a major MNLF camp.

Randolph Parcasio, an MNLF spokesperson, told the INQUIRER that the military until yesterday was preventing men and women from moving in and out of the villages for still unknown reasons.

"It was very similar to that of the Kempetai Army during the Japanese occupation," Parcasio said quoting a report from Ustadz Muksin, a local MNLF commander in Sitio Talucanga, Barangay Mana.

On Sunday evening, the military summoned three of the four residents who were used as guides by the raiders of the Barcelo Pearl Farm Beach Resort in the Island Garden City of Samal on May 22.

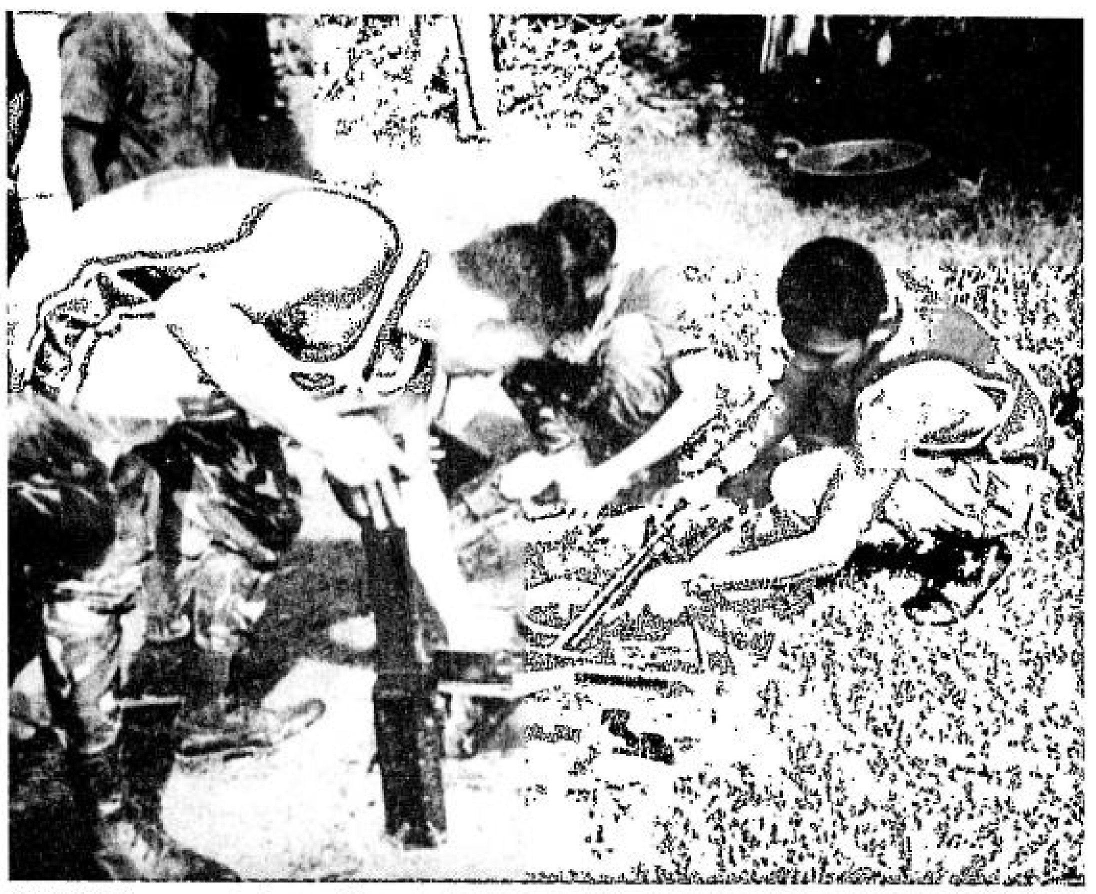
The military brought Alim and Eden Labani and Hamid Muda to Sitios Talucanga and Balas in Barangay Mana where they were made to identify members of the armed men from among the local men who were made to line up.

Parcasio said Sitios Talucanga and Balas are in its Camp Bilal. He said the military failed to coordinate with the local MNLF command.

"Under the peace agreement, the military could not just enter any MNLF camp without coordination," Parcasio said.

Col. Pedrito Magsino, commanding officer of the Army's 601st Brigade, declined to face reporters who were seeking his comment on the MNLF complaint.

But Undersecretary Jesus Dureza, presidential assistant for regional concerns in Southern Mindanao, said he would look into the complaint and would try to address it to at least ease the tension.



SOLDIERS prepare their guns for more battles as they pursue the raiders of the Pearl Farm Resort. ALLAN NAWAL

"We will patch this up. I am going there with Parcasio to see what we can do," Dureza said.

As this developed, some local officials expressed suspicion that the armed men might have already escaped from the military dragnet because of earlier difficulties in deploying troops.

The military had to use helicopters in bringing troops to higher areas in Mana and in Talagotong in nearby Don Marcelino town until yesterday.

But Malita Mayor Claude Bautista said there was information reaching him that the group is still holed up in the hinterland Barangay Lais here and in Talagotong, where the group earlier killed a farmer.

But despite the heavy deployment of troops, the military failed to locate the raiders.

The only encounter recorded so far was on Friday last week, when at least two soldiers died.

The military has claimed that the armed men suffered five casualties. Not a single body, however, has been recovered.

Chavit exit paves way for other Singsons

By LEONCIO BALBIN JR.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

VIGAN CITY—The exit of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, Ilocos Sur political kingpin and the Singson clan's patriarch, from the provincial capitol where he reigned for nearly three decades, will give the much needed break for other Singsons to shine.

There are eight members of the Singson clan who won in the last elections.

The biggest gainer in Singson's absence is not from his immediate family. It looks like his former gubernatorial rival and estranged cousin, Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson, benefited most.

Eric solidified his control in the second district of the province with a landslide victory over Chavit's candidate, former Sta. Cruz Mayor Virgilio Valle.

Eric had strengthened his political grip in his political base, Candon City, with the handy victory of his wife, outgoing Ilocos Sur Rep. Grace Singson, over outgoing Mayor Ramon Balbin.

Candon City has the most votes in the province.

Ilocos Sur's third vote-rich town of Narvacan is headed by Eric's younger sister, re-elected Mayor Charito Zaragoza.

Eric has also a reliable man in the provincial board. His brother-in-law, Sangguniang Panlalawigan member-elect Edgardo Zaragoza, husband of Charito, is a known critic of Chavit and had been very vocal in his objections to many of the provincial government's projects and programs.

But Eric has much respect for Chavit. "He is still a leader to reckon with," Eric said, noting that his successor, Ilocos Sur governor-elect Deogracias Victor Savellano, is his personal choice.

"He would have a big influence on the new officials," Eric added.

Although hesitant to discuss his upcoming role in Ilocos Sur politics, Eric said he would have a bigger role in the development of the province.

Chavit's younger brother, vice governor-elect Jeremias Singson, is another man who would try to show his stuff. Jeremias, who does not hide his ambition to also head the province, has long been under the shadow of Chavit.

The outgoing governor's niece, reelected Vigan City Mayor Eva Marie Singson Medina, will serve her third term and could be also be seeking a higher post.

Other Singsons who were elected were Chavit's son, Ronald, as member of the provincial board; his sister Germilina as Vigan City councilor; and Eric's brother, Alfonso, as Candon City councilor.

Early retirement plan places Napocor near manpower crisis

BAGUIO CITY—The National Power Corp. is in the throes of a manpower crisis, an ironic twist in the government bid to privatize the firm which helped silence its toughest critics—its unions.

This was disclosed by a Napocor union leader who said the power firm did not anticipate the large volume of workers, who availed themselves of a generous early retirement package it offered to prepare for the passage of the controversial omnibus power reform bill.

Jimmy Salman, Cordillera president of the Napocor Employees and Workers Union (Newu), said among the firm's latest retirees are union leaders who led protest rallies in Congress against the power measure from 1999 and 2000.

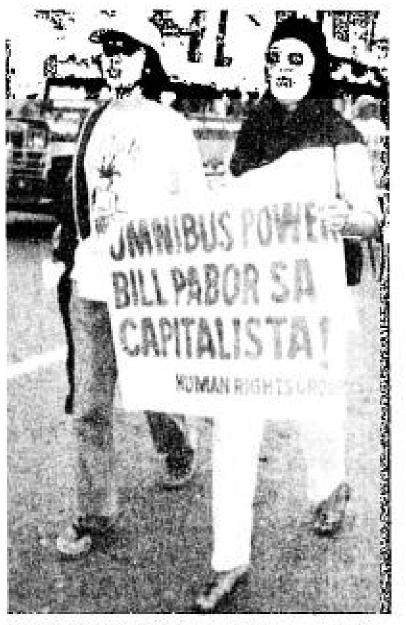
He said the firm sought to retrench or retire about 30 percent of its workforce, but the volume of retirees exceeded this quota, and opened a huge labor vacuum.

The firm's internal crisis had prompted the Napocor unions to sideline a strong lobby against the power reform measure, Salman said.

Chapters of the Newu and the Napocor Employees Consolidated Union (Necu) in the Cordillera and Mindanao have sought the repudiation of 47 power purchasing contracts with private electricity suppliers that were entered into during the administration of former President Fidel Ramos.

They have also demanded consumer-friendly safeguards in the proposed power measure as conditions for supporting Napocor's privatization.

Napocor's internal problems distracted the unions long enough to allow Malacañang time to negotiate a compromise power bill in the last two months, Salman said.



NATIONWIDE protests hound the power reform bill. FROILAN GALLARDO

The May 14 elections also polarized some of the original hardline critics of the power reform bill, he added.

"There are former critics who now want to rescue it, because some of the allies of (deposed President Joseph Estrada are) now against the bill. Some are offering their support because of party lines, and the unions are equally affected," he said.

Other sectors, like the party-list group Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives (Apec), are now trying to rescue the bill, convinced that some winning senatorial candidates of the administration People Power Coalition intend to pass a revised measure that will guarantee new monopolies.

These PPC candidates are proteges of a power firm, which continues to lobby for a special provision many fear would allow monopolies to run the country's commercial power infrastructure once the Napocor is privatized, Luis Manuel Corral, Apec secretary general, said in an earlier interview.

Corral was one of the key lobbyists working against House Bill 8457 and Senate Bill 2000, both approved versions of the power reform measure.

Corral said Apec and former critics are now inclined to protect certain "corrections" in the power bill, "which is now good for the electric cooperatives."

Salman said the remaining union leaders have been cooperating with Napocor president Jesus Alcordo to help stave off the impact of a weakened pool of power experts.

A reorganization plan initiated by Alcordo's predecessor, Federico Puno, last year sought to reduce the Napocor work force to suit a streamlined operation, Salman said.

Puno had directed the breakup of the state power firm into six generation companies, a transmission company and a holding firm, using the structural framework of the still-pending power bill.

Salman said union leaders have been protecting the status of the current workforce. Some union leaders were promoted, although their terms of work have yet to match the new skills criteria set by Puno last year.

"We are negotiating so the rules will accommodate the remaining Napocor employees, essentially because they are the ones available," Salman said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Group drafting transparency agenda

A NEW group seeking transparency in government and an end to corruption will hold regional consultations next month to draft a transparency and accountability agenda that would be presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The consultations will be held in the Visayas June 1-2 at the Montebello Hotel in Cebu City.

The Evelio Javier Foundation Inc. will be the lead convenor for the Transparency and Accountability Foundation (TAN) in the Visayas.

Consultations would be held in Mindanao June 5-6 at the Grand Regal Hotel in Davao City.

Consultations for Luzon would be held June 8-9 in Metro Manila.

The TAN, in a press statement, said although Ms Macapagal has repeatedly promised a policy of transparency and accountability, there was no concrete step taken to pursue this policy.

TAN was formed in November last year with the primary objective of coordinating anti-corruption initiatives.

Among the groups that compose TAN are the Social Weather Station, Makati Business Club, ABS-CBN Foundation, Kilosbayan, the De La Salle University, The Asia Foundation and Transparency International-Phils.

After polls, teachers get brief rest for classes

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—Without any breather from election duties, some 200 teachers Wednesday began classes for this city's more than 5,000 public elementary school students to make up for the anticipated lost school days in this year's flooding season.

School buildings that were used as polling precincts were not yet cleared of posters, flyers, sample ballots and streamers when students attended orientation sessions starting Wednesday.

Regular classes were held in seven schools in Barangays Sto. Rosario, Sta. Lucia, Mansgold, San Juan, San Pedro and Magliman beginning Monday, according to Elita Flor Umali, schools division superintendent of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports in Pampanga.

The teachers had rested, enabling them to continue with the practice of opening schools three weeks ahead of the June 4 schedule, Umali said.

She said the practice began in this city in 1995. "This is in anticipation of the floods and for the safety of the children," she said.

Perennial flooding in those villages in the last five years had disrupted classes, with students losing an average of 30 to 40 school days from July to October.

The disruption of classes is not peculiar to this city. Classes in Pampanga's 18 towns have also been interrupted since 1991 because Mt. Pinatubo's lahar, washed yearly by rains to the lowlands, continue to clog the province's major rivers that lead to the Manila Bay.

Only Mabalacat and Magalang towns and Angeles City in the first district are least affected by flooding.

The DECS, however, strictly requires a 205-day attendance in public and private schools.

Also on Monday, more than 1,000 students of the G.D. Mendoza High School in Guagua town resumed classes.

Classes in that coastal town are usually suspended for two weeks because floodwaters reach as high as four feet.

In the other coastal towns of Macababe, Masantol and Minalin, schools are closed for two to three months because of the floods, according to Tarcila Javier, assistant schools division superintendent.

While 69 other public high schools do not hold early classes for their nearly 76,000 students, Javier said teachers try to cope by holding Saturday classes, adding school hours or extending classes until May.

Teachers had been deputized nationwide to serve during the elections, an extra job for which they are supposed to get paid additional allowances.

Many teachers in other parts of the country, however, complained of not getting their election allowances on time or of receiving insufficient allowances.

Some teachers had also been on the receiving end of election complaints, being accused of cheating by losing candidates. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Ex-mayor, 83, shot by husband, 91

BY ALEX V. PAL
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—A former acting mayor of this city was wounded after she was shot by her 91-year-old husband in an apparent family quarrel, police said here.

The husband surrendered to police.

Police said Pilar Teves Raymond was wounded in the right buttock after she was shot by husband Carlos Bell Raymond.

Carlos refused to give a statement in the absence of a lawyer.

PO3 Ricardo Solamillo said they received from the couple's son James a .38 caliber revolver, which James was said to have recovered from his father's possession.

The gun, a snub-nosed *paltik*, had two spent and three live bullets. It had no serial number. Police said they would subject the gun to a ballistic test to determine if it was the same gun used to shoot Pilar, 83.

Police also said they would subject Carlos to a paraffin test to find out if he fired the gun.

Rosemarie Elnar, a maid of the Raymond family, told police that she was in Pilar's room to arrange her suitcase as she had just arrived from an out-of-town trip about 4 p.m.

She said Carlos then came in and told her to get out. As soon as Rosemarie had left the room, Carlos shut the door and soon she heard Pilar shouting for help.

She said she informed James of the commotion. James told police that before he was able to respond to his mother's plea, he heard a gunshot.

He told police he couldn't get in the room because the door was locked. Rosemarie got a duplicate key.

When they opened the door, James said he saw his father holding a gun and her mother, who was already hit, was sitting on the floor.

Pilar was immediately brought to the Silliman University Medical Center for treatment. Carlos went with responding policemen to the police station.

Carlos had to be brought to the hospital for treatment about 6 p.m. for minor scratches in his hand.

Then President Corazon Aquino named Pilar as OIC mayor of this city in 1986, immediately after the 1986 Edsa Revolution. She replaced Mayor Lorenzo Maxino.

ROUNDUP

Bike for a cause on June 12

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—In support of President Macapagal's call for reconciliation, the Regional Association of Government Communicators (Ragcom) here will hold the "Sikad Alang sa Demokrasya" on June 12. Rafael Magbanua, Ragcom president, said Sikad 2001 is a unique way to celebrate the country's 103rd Independence Day. "Instead of the usual flag caravan motorcade, we are inviting 103 cyclists who will wave flags and roam around the city for 103 minutes," Magbanua said. This seeks to promote environment-friendly transportation systems that do not need gasoline or emit smoke, and unity and reconciliation among local officials after the tight elections here. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Soldier kills 3

BATANGAS CITY—An Air Force soldier shot dead an unarmed tricycle driver and his two passengers over an argument on who should give way to whom on a pothole-filled barangay road here, police reported. Tricycle driver Braullo Aguila, 40, of Barangay Balete, and his two passengers, cousins Domingo Aguila, 21, of Barangay Balete and Gregorio Alliagas ,34, of Barangay Banaba East were reported killed by Air Force soldier Cenon Delgado. The three suffered multiple .45-caliber bullet wounds in their heads and bodies, said SPO3 Danilo Magtibay, the city police desk officer. The assailant escaped shortly after the shooting rampage, Magtibay also said. *Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

A different kind of flu

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said "there should be no cause for alarm" as the latest bird flu is different from the chicken flu that hit Hong Kong in 1997. "We have already banned the importation of such products (chicken and birds)," Montemayor said. Montemayor recently issued an order prohibiting the importation of chicken and bird products from Hong Kong and Macau. *Ellen P. Red, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

2 pushers nabbed

BATANGAS CITY—Police seized 59.2 grams of shabu (methampethamine hydrochloride) worth P100,000 from two suspected pushers in Barangay Bolbok, this city, police said. Johnny Sasa, 24, of San Miguel, Manila, and Mohamad Zainudin, 32, of Fairview, Quezon City, were caught selling shabu to civilian agents posing as buyers. The arresting team, composed of PO1 Mario Alvarez, PO3 Danilo Fernandez and PO2 Lemuel Panaligan, was able to seize two decks of shabu weighing 31.6 grams and 26.6 grams. *Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Cotabato City nursery

COTABATO CITY—The provincial government of North Cotabato will set up a nursery for pre-school children of government employees. Provincial Administrative Officer Erlinda Pantaleon said at least 22 children 5 years old and below have been enrolled in the "Early Childhood Care and Development Program" of Gov. Emmanuel Piñol, who ordered the release of P450,000 for the establishment of a center in the provincial capitol area. The center, occupying the western wing of the provincial capitol gym in Barangay Amas in Kidapawan City, was formally opened on April 23. It is equipped with the latest audio-video facilities for early childhood learning. The program, undertaken with the coordination of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, is considered the first in the country, Pantaleon said.*Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

39 gamblers nabbed

BATANGAS CITY—The Department of Interior and Local Government Task Force Jericho arrested 39 persons in separate raids on two illegal gambling dens in two Batangas towns. Raided were a *sakla* den in Barangay Taysan, San Jose town, and a *jueteng* den in Barangay Masaya, Rosario town, a report from the Batangas provincial police office said. The *sakla* and *jueteng* maintainers escaped. The raiders recovered playing cards and P5,310.75 in cash in the *sakla* den and voluminous *jueteng lastillas* and P2,130 in cash in the *jueteng* den. *Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Jailed bet defeated

MABITAC, Laguna–Detained murder suspect ex-mayor Felix R. Carpio of this town was defeated by re-electionist Mayor Bernardo R. Sayarot by as much as 2,000 votes in the mayoral race. Cynthia Gamez of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) told the INQUIRER that despite its having been declared an election hotspot in Laguna, Mabitac had a very orderly, fair and peaceful elections. SPO1 Fernando Calinaga, intelligence section chief of Mabitac police, said there was no indication that the municipality deserved to be called a hotspot. *Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Dumaguete voters reject media men

DUMAGUETE CITY--The appeal of mediamen to the electorate, demonstrated recently by the strong showing of broadcaster Noli de Castro in the senatorial race, seems not to be working for mediamen here.

Provincial board member Melimor Saycon, a consistent topnotcher in the Sangguniang Panlalawigan race for three consecutive terms, was a poor third in the three-cornered vice gubernatorial race in the province.

Saycon, a popular radio broadcaster here, was perceived to be "invincible" at the start of the campaign period.

City Councilor Francis Alloso, a young broadcaster, also failed in his bid for a seat in the provincial board representing the second district.

Alloso, a first-term councilor, ranked eighth among 12 candidates. The board has vacancies for only four winners.

City Councilor Jess Estrabella, newscaster and radio announcer, also failed in his bid for reelection. He landed 15th among 36 candidates vying for 10 city council seats.

Gerry Orot, a popular disk jockey who goes by the radio name "Gerry Wonder," also failed to make it to the Sangguniang Bayan in the town of Sibulan.

Marlon Silva, of a local radio station, also lost in his bid for a city council seat in Tanjay.

The same fate befell Junnifer A. Medenilla, a reporter of station dyWC, who failed to make it to the Sangguniang Bayan of Manjuyod.

Fany Solamillo, another news correspondent of a local radio station, lost his bid for a municipal council seat in the town of Valencia.

Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Visayas and Mindanao wil be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila Hi 33° Lo 24°	**Baguio** Hi 24° Lo 16°	**Tuguegarao** Hi 33° Lo 23°	**Laoag** Hi 33° Lo 24°
Clark Zone Hi 33° Lo 23°	**Tagaytay** Hi 29° Lo 22°	**Legazpi** Hi 33° Lo 25°	**Calapan** Hi 34° Lo 23°
Bacolod Hi 31° Lo 25°	**Roxas** Hi 33° Lo 24°	**Cebu** Hi 32° Lo 24°	**Tacloban** Hi 33° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos Hi 33° Lo 25°	**Zamboanga** Hi 35° Lo 26°	**Cagayan de Oro** Hi 32° Lo 23°	**Davao** Hi 33° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

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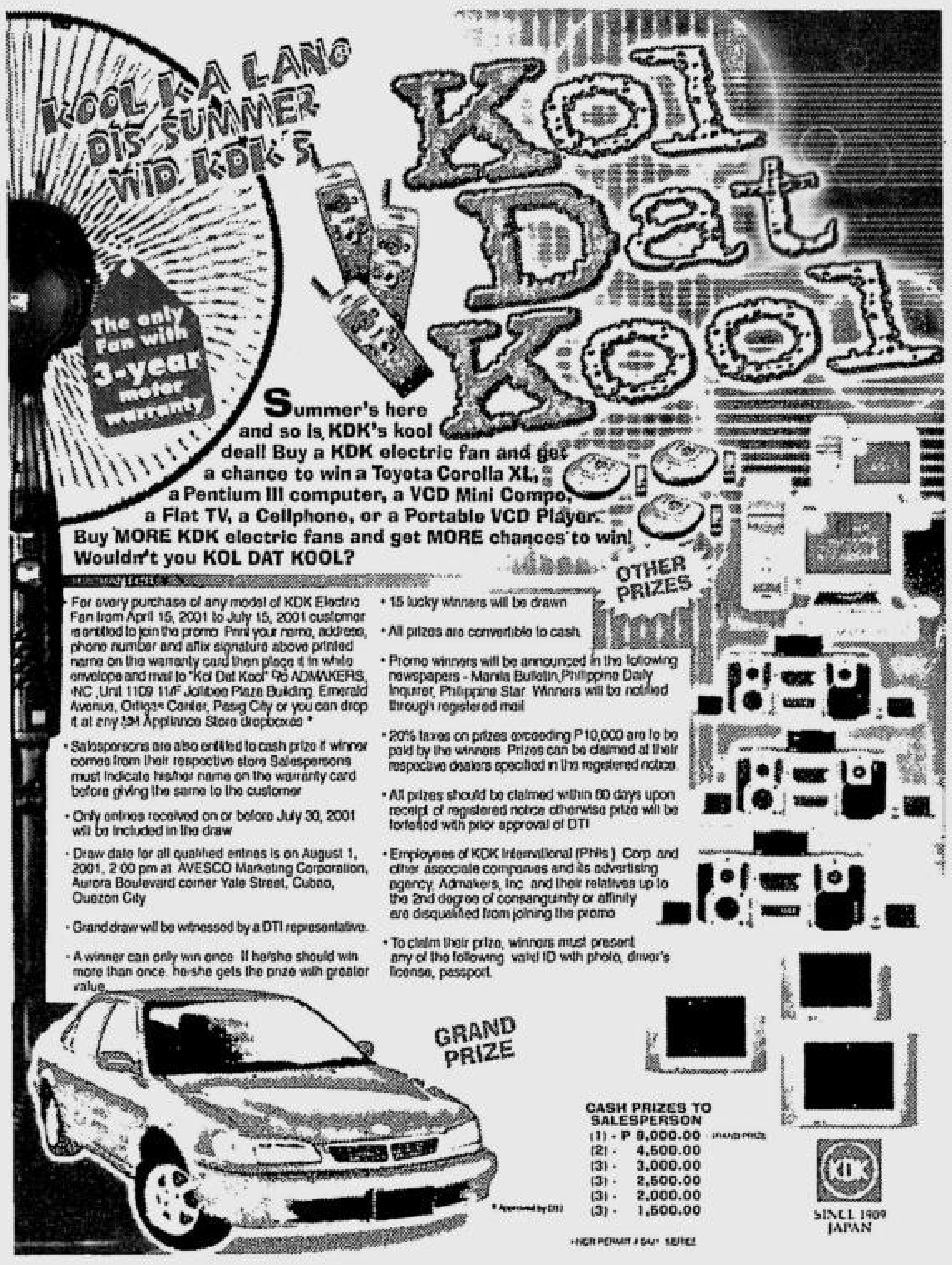
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- Salespersons are also entitled to cash prize if winner comes from their respective store. Salespersons must indicate his/her name on the warranty card before giving the same to the customer.
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- Draw date for all qualified entries is on August 1, 2001, 2:00 pm at AVESCO Marketing Corporation, Aurora Boulevard corner Yale Street, Cubao, Quezon City.
- Grand draw will be witnessed by a DTI representative.
- A winner can only win once. If he/she should win more than once, he/she gets the prize with greater value.
- 15 lucky winners will be drawn.
- All prizes are convertible to cash.
- Promo winners will be announced in the following newspapers - Manila Bulletin, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Philippine Star. Winners will be notified through registered mail.
- 20% taxes on prizes exceeding P10,000 are to be paid by the winners. Prizes can be claimed at their respective dealers specified in the registered notice.
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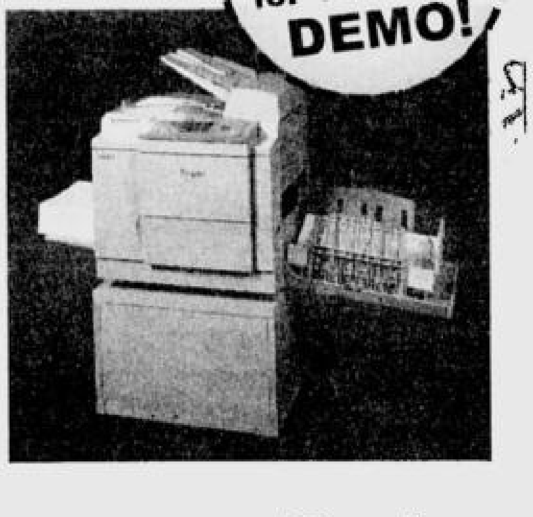

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'This is for real; it doesn't need another take'

(From page A1)

the night before the wedding. A cousin, lawyer Erlyn Macapagal de Leon, represented her.

Gonzales, the country's representative to the 1994 Miss Universe pageant held in Manila, looked every inch a beauty queen as she walked down the aisle in a Joe Salazar gown, while Regine Velasquez sang "From This Moment."

Covered in a silk tulle veil, Gonzales wore a princess-cut gown in four-ply silk organza with a long pleated train. Salazar also did the baby-pink gowns of the entourage.

Gonzales followed tradition by wearing "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue."

She used an ancient veil from the Vera-Perez matriarch, Azucena Vera-Perez. "This has been used by all the brides in the Vera-Perez clan," Gonzales said.

Gonzales' stepfather is Pepito Vera-Perez.

She also borrowed an antique arrha with Spanish coins from the Vera-Perez family, and wore her mother's diamond earrings.

She wore a blue garter and new shoes by Lila Almario.

The bride was given away by her father, former action star Bernard Bonnin, her mother Elvie Gonzales who is a former beauty queen herself, and her brother Richard Bonnin.

The groom wore a black Armani suit. The black suits of the men in the entourage were done by JC Buendia.

Igy Boy, Muhlach's 13-year-old son with actress Janice de Belen, was one of the best men, with Muhlach's younger brother Albert.

Regine also sang "Ikaw." Lani Misalucha sang "The Gift" during the offertory.

Robert Seña did a moving "Our Father." He and his wife Isay Alvarez sang the Andrea Bocceli-Celine Dion duet "The Prayer."

Side A's Joey Generoso and Misalucha did the Barbara Streisand-Bryan Adam duet, "I Finally Found Someone." South Border sang their hits like "Kahit Kailan" and "Love of my Life."

Flowers from Europe

The church and the reception venues were decked with blooms flown in by 1816 Flowers from Germany, Holland and Australia.

After the church ceremony, a cocktail party was held in an all-white tent set up in front of the clubhouse at Camp John Hay. A separate tent for the presidential table was rented and flown in from Singapore.

Le Souffle catered the food for both the cocktail reception and the dinner.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

TO HAVE and to hold for Aga is his bride Charlene on a lucky-number day.

Restaurant owner Jessie Sincioco told the INQUIRER that the bride and groom chose the menu as early as January.

Dinner started with salad with pan-fried goose liver, scallops and grilled shitake mushrooms with balsamic dressing, consommé with champignon mushrooms, grilled Chilean sea bass with mariner sauce and *dalandan* sherbet.

The main course was US black Angus tenderloin in bordelaise sauce, served with baked potato and sautéed vegetables.

Dessert included mango and crepe flambé, pastries, cakes, pralines and chocolate fondue.

Sincioco said she brought a crew of 70 to serve the 500 guests.

The seven-layer fondant cake was created by the bride's mother, who has a cake business.

Ed Pasamba's 25-piece String Minstrels provided romantic music throughout the reception. The Side A band also performed, singing one of their hits, "Forevermore," which is also one of the couple's favorites.

ABS-CBN, which will air an exclusive telecast of the wedding in a two-hour TV special on June 3, brought to Baguio two OB vans and a production staff and crew of 140 people.

"We arrived here as early as Thursday evening," said network executive Linggit Tan. "We also inspected the venues as early as February."

The couple's friends from show biz came in full force, including Santiago brothers Rowell, Raymart and Randy who was with pregnant wife Malou Coronel, Willie Revillame, Richard Gomez and wife Lucy Torres with their baby Julianna and manager Douglas Quijano.

Clan attends

Despite Muhlach's reported rift with his father and aunt Amalia Fuentes, members of the clan attended the wedding—former child actor Niño Muhlach, Arlene, Albert, Liezl Sumilang-Martinez and husband Albert Martinez.

The whirlwind romance of Muhlach and Gonzales started nine months ago on the set of the now-defunct ABS-CBN sitcom, "Oki Doki Doc."

The wedding was held on a Monday since it used to be their taping day for the program.

They chose May 28 as the wedding date because Muhlach has always considered "8" as a lucky number. His former residence in Pasig was Residencia 888. May 28 is also the birthday of his mother Anita Aquino.

Rita Neri of the Wedding Store, who arranged the big event, hired a 50-member team from the Premium Security Agency of Armin Nocom for the wedding. The agency worked with Baguio police and the Presidential Security Group (PSG).

The other principal sponsors who came were Sen. Loren Legarda, former first lady Amelita Ramos, movie action king Fernando Poe Jr., movie star and Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos, Marichu Vera-Perez and film producer Lily Monteverde, former Speaker Jose de Venecia and ABS-CBN executives Gabby Lopez, Charo Santos-Concio and Freddie Garcia.

Actor Richard Gomez stood as proxy for Viva Films big boss Vic Del Rosario.

COMELEC

as of 6:15 p.m., May 28

95 COCs (93.14%)

1	DE CASTRO	15,049,663
2	FLAVIER	10,552,604
3	OSMEÑA	10,297,078
4	DRILON	10,132,728
5	ANGARA	10,080,721
6	ARROYO	10,066,504
7	VILLAR	10,009,397
8	MAGSAYSAY	10,008,007
9	LACSON	9,956,413
10	EJERCITO	9,856,044
11	PANGILINAN	9,850,226
12	HONASAN	9,781,160
13	RECTO	9,298,867
14	SANTIAGO	9,022,527
15	ENRILE	9,022,088
16	PUNO	8,093,575
17	MERCADO	7,309,219
18	TAÑADA	7,262,652
19	PAGDANGANAN	6,403,062
20	MONSOD	5,900,532
21	HERRERA	5,896,852
22	RASUL	4,719,832
23	MADRIGAL	4,717,543
24	CHATO	4,201,624
25	YASAY	4,123,852

Recto hangs on to No. 13

(From page A1)

eight COCs canvassed yesterday.

Former police chief Panfilo Lacson rose to No. 9 from No. 10. A total of 100,369 votes separate him from former first lady Loi Ejercito, who climbed to 10th place from 11th.

In another indication that the PPC was facing tough days ahead, erstwhile sixth placer Ramon Magsaysay Jr. fell to the eighth spot, formerly occupied by Francis Pangilinan, who dropped to the 11th place.

Lacson only needs only more than 51,594 votes to dislodge Magsaysay.

Santiago took the 14th place from Enrile by a lead of merely 439 votes.

Former Speaker Manuel Villar Jr. and reelectionist Sen. Gregorio Honasan have remained at seventh and 12th places, respectively.

Independent Noli de Castro now has a commanding lead of 4.5 million votes over second placer Juan Flavier. Sergio Osmeña III remained in third place.

Santiago and Enrile got a big boost in Nueva Ecija where they got 425,524 and 405,144 votes, respectively, compared with Recto's 184,804. The province, controlled by the Josons, known close allies of ousted President Joseph Estrada, voted 8-4-1 for the PnM.

Imelda's Leyte voted 8-4-1 for PPC

In Leyte, the PPC had an 8-4-1 advantage, allowing Recto to get back at Enrile and Santiago. He led Enrile and Santiago by 33,175 and 47,773 votes, respectively.

Santiago, however, edged Recto in Taguig-Pateros where the former got 74,921 votes compared with the latter's 66,253. Voters gave the PnM a 7-5-1 advantage in the congressional district.

Enrile was also helped by a 24,193 lead over Recto in Occidental Mindoro, which voted 8-4-1 for the PnM.

It was Recto's turn to beat Enrile in Basilan with a lead of 16,158. Although it was 9-3-1 for the PnM here, Recto surprisingly placed third. All others in the Top Five were from the PnM except for De Castro who placed second after Santanina Rasul, a Muslim.

Quezon City gave a split vote for the PnM and PPC, 6-6-1, but Recto got only 296,634 votes compared with Santiago's 350,442.

Only De Castro and Osmeña were able to join the winning circle in Sultan Kudarat, which voted 11-1-1 for the PnM.

Santiago trounced Recto with a lead of 49,345.

It was 12-1 for the PPC in Tawi-Tawi, with only Angara from the PnM making it to the Magic 13. Recto got 75,204 votes and Santiago, only 10,244.

7 COCs with 4.5M votes

The National Board of Canvassers was still waiting for the COCs from Caloocan City, Cebu, Cebu City, Eastern Samar, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao. These areas have a total of 4.5 million registered voters.

After the suspension of the canvassing at 6:15 p.m., the National Board of Canvassers (NBC) and PPC and PnM lawyers had a closed-door meeting to thresh out discrepancies in certain COCs such as those from Lipa City in Batangas, Palimbang in Sultan Kudarat, Zamboanga del Norte, Tawi-Tawi and Taguig.

Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo, the NBC head, said "no cheating" has so far been discovered when the COCs were scrutinized during the executive session. He admitted that there were "corrections" in the COCs of Sultan Kudarat, Tawi-Tawi and Zamboanga del Norte.

"I'm not saying that there's cheating and I don't think there is any intention to cheat," Benipayo said.

He said there was no fraud found in the COC of Lipa City where Recto's votes were allegedly padded by more than 9,000 votes. As explained earlier by Recto's lawyer, Romulo Makalintal, the discrepancy was a result of a correction made in the COC for Batangas which reflected the higher correct vote for Recto.

In Taguig-Pateros, it was discovered that Lacson's vote was overstated by 100,000 due to the insertion of the figure "1" before the actual number of votes of 80,693. Lawyers of both sides have agreed to correct the figure.

But former Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez, counsel for Ejercito, said padding in favor of Recto was discovered in seven of 10 COCs examined last night.

Rodriguez said that Recto's votes were padded in two towns of Tawi-Tawi. He said the padding in Zamboanga del Norte and Tawi-Tawi totaled 60,000 votes.

Both the PPC and PnM, however, agreed to exclude the votes in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat, in the canvassing due to the discovery of padding for all candidates in the town.

It was in Palimbang where Recto emerged No. 1 with 15,000 votes. Rodriguez had earlier questioned the COC from the town, saying there was padding for Recto since all other candidates got only 1,000 to 2,000 votes.

Makalintal, however, brushed aside the allegations of padding, saying these were only meant to destroy his client's credibility.

He said Recto might climb to 11th and 12th place after the votes from Lanao del Norte, Maguindanao, Cebu and Cebu City were canvassed.

Can animal, man co-exist in Calauit?

(From page A1)

animals that look out of place, not us," BCM president Rebocato Liquib said.

This island became a ghost town in March 1977 following the issuance of Executive Order 1626 declaring Barangays Halsey and Burabod, both on nearby Culion Island, relocation sites for Calauit's subsistence fishing communities.

Nine years later, the resettled Calauit folk took advantage of the fall of the Marcos regime and formed the BCM. Soon after, at least 72 families belonging to the movement returned to what they called their "place of birth."

No thanks to Cory

"No thanks to Cory (former President Corazon Aquino). We thought she was on our side. The Aquino administration just looked the other way. It was clear. The animals were more important than us, the people of Calauit," recalled the 68-year-old Liquib, "Tay Cating" to fellow BCM members.

The returning Calauit residents "found strength in each other when the government ignored our pleas. We tried solving the problem ourselves. We resorted to the *bayanihan* spirit which, to our surprise, worked," noted Ismael Tradio, 64, whose family was one of 13 allowed by a local court to stay on the island.

In May 1987, the Presidential Committee on Human Rights took up the cudgels for the BCM by calling for the immediate repeal of Proclamation 1578 and EO 1626 which, it declared, were "culpable violations not only of Sections 1 and 6 of the Bill of Rights in the 1986 Constitution but also of the 1973 Constitution."

In a draft executive order, the PCHR recommended the immediate return of the displaced Calauit folk to their ancestral lands.

"The co-existence of the displaced residents, lawful possessors (of property), and the wildlife will be taken into consideration if no prejudice would result to the former. In case of conflict, priority shall be given to the displaced residents and the wildlife shall be translocated to any uninhabited island," the PCHR said in the EO that Aquino never signed.

BCM members also condemned Aquino's successors—Presidents Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada—for "turning deaf and blind to our pleas. They ignored our plight. We had trusted our lives to politicians from Manila and Puerto Princesa who made promises left and right. Many of them broke our hearts. But we won't be fooled again," Liquib said.

This island, located on the northwestern tip of Busuanga Island and surrounded by a 20,000-hectare marine sanctuary, is shared by Barangays Quezon and Calauit, founded in 1917 and 1925, respectively.

Before their forcible eviction in 1977, there were more than 260 families here, mainly the Apuens, Tradios, Lledos, Darols, Mueds, Mondragons and Eguias.

When this reporter visited the game preserve, more than 130 families (668 persons) had taken over coastal properties in different areas of Calauit, hardly a recipe for calm in a wildlife sanctuary.

"Expect more BCM members to return to Calauit in the coming months. The recovery of their ancestral lands is strengthening their resolve to return to the place of their birth," Melchor Apuen, 39, said.

Apuen was a high school sophomore when Marcos issued the order relocating his village to Culion.

"The returnees are taking advantage of the absence of the project's security backup, normally a small team of soldiers from Western Command headquarters in Puerto Princesa and policemen from Palawan towns. They were pulled out last December by their mother units for various reasons," said the game warden.

'Squatters'

PCSD staffers called the returnees squatters because "they have built homes on land that has been declared a game preserve by the government."

But Joseph Tradio, Ismael's son, found the tag offensive. "Calling returning Calauit folk squatters is a serious violation of their human rights. These people know their rights," he said.

Joseph, now Coron's municipal dentist, was only 2 when his family was "forcibly moved to Culion."

"People are returning to their roots. There's nothing wrong with that. It's like a family reunion. It's a natural instinct," he said. "In Calauit, old ways persist."

Presidential Commission on Human Rights files showed that in 1973, the Bureau of Lands surveyed the island, supposedly to look for a resettlement site for farmers displaced by the operation of the Marcos crony-owned Yulo King Ranch.

Calauit residents were told the government was considering putting up a zoo on the island. Then came Proclamation 1578.

"Most of the displaced families were paid a pittance for their crops, farm animals and nipa huts, but not for their lands. To aggravate the situation, the military harassed the locals, demolished their huts, seized their fishing boats and equipment. Children were deprived of education, families were separated and several senior citizens died of broken hearts after being torn from the land of their birth. Those were martial law days and you couldn't say no to Marcos and his minions," said social worker Lolita Antonio, a staunch BCM supporter.

"Culion did not turn out to be another Calauit where the soil is fertile, the waters teeming with fish. These are valid reasons to insist on coming back," Antonio said.

On Jan. 6, 1987, then Agriculture Minister Ramon Mitra issued a directive banning the gathering of any fish or aquatic resources within the island's seven-kilometer marine zone. The order is still in force.

For the past 24 years, "it's been a choice between animal conservation and human survival. Calauit residents lost the argument during the time of Cory, FVR and Erap. But they haven't lost hope. That's one thing that keeps them going," Antonio said.

"The BCM is not asking for the whole island. Many BCM members are now pushing for co-existence with the animals. They could draw life from the fields and waters around the island," Liquib added.

Just like old times. "At this point, a little give-and-take on the part of the Macapagal administration won't hurt," he said.

Living together

As early as July 1987, the human rights commission had urged the government to "allow man and animals to live together on Calauit and to consider human welfare over animal conservation."

The body maintained that "man and animals can co-exist and that proper education and training in environmental conservation should be provided to those interested in returning to Calauit."

Out of the question, replied Romeo Dorado, PCSD finance and administrative officer. "Proclamation 1578 is still in force. Repeal of the directive is unlikely. Those African and endemic species need the protection they deserve."

If BCM members would be allowed to live on the island, "they should comply with certain rules and regulations and give the sanctuary a hand in animal protection," said Mundita Lim, assistant director of the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The DENR has a seat in the PCSD.

Lim and DENR lawyer Florisa Almodiel both feared an environmental nightmare with the return of the island's original settlers and their extended families.

Will the animals survive the onslaught of human predators? Lim did not think so.

Project staffers said the same thing. Without hesitation, they called the BCM members the most significant threat to the animal species being sheltered at the sanctuary.

"If the settlers are finally allowed to remain, they should stop their hunting and poaching activities. They need to cooperate with those running the project," they said.

The DENR has a memorandum of agreement with the PCSD over protected areas. "We're supposed to be partners but that's not the case," Lim said.

She believes the island was declared a sanctuary "for the wrong reasons."

"The problem is we don't know the impact of the introduction of exotic animals on Calauit since there was no data collected from the original batch of African animals. During the '70s, the Ministry of Natural Resources had no Environmental Impact Assessment," she said.

Lim stressed the African animals on Calauit were not in any danger. "The government should protect the Calamian deer, wild pigs and other endemic species, not the giraffes and zebras. If they want to maintain the African animals for tourism purposes, they should ensure they won't further damage the environment," she said.

"If we are to accept that Calauit is a wildlife sanctuary in the real sense of the word, we cannot have people co-existing with the animals there," said environmentalist Jose Ma. Lorenzo Tan.

"When you have people, you have crops and you have domestic animals like dogs, pigs, cows, carabaos and goats. And you have rice, corn and vegetables. The animals will eat your rice, corn and vegetables. Who then has the last say, man or animal?"

"So the distinction has to be made clear. Is Calauit a wildlife sanctuary or a place for people?" he said. "The PCSD should follow the official designation of the park. Now if that designation is changed, fine. But until then, they should stick to it."

Tan called the game preserve, which he has visited several times, a "misguided experiment in the introduction of exotic species."

"Because you don't do that, you're not supposed to do that," he said. Tan noted that "what some people consider the strength of Calauit—the African animals—is actually its weakness. They're *mestizo*, not endemic wildlife."

Also, "you go there to see giraffes, zebras and impalas. But there are no lions. You know when people go to Africa, they look for the Big 5—lions, leopards, rhinoceros, buffaloes and elephants. None of these are in Calauit," he said.

"As a showcase of African animals, Calauit is not even world-class. Plus the fact that you mix in local animals makes it *chopsuey*. It's like a car with a Honda engine, a Toyota transmission and the roof of a jeepney."

But Sariego and the rest of the Calauit project staff did not think so. As far as they were concerned, the island remains "one of northern Palawan's top tourist destinations" and after 24 years still a marketable tourism product.

"They want proof? Last month alone, more than 800 persons visited the island, breaking our peak season record. Guests of popular resorts like Club Paradise (on nearby Dimakya Island) and those on the Busuanga mainland continue to visit Calauit," Sariego told the INQUIRER.

Local tourists are charged P100 for entrance while foreigners pay P300. Fees collected go straight to the National Treasury, not to the game preserve.

So what'll it be? Man or animal, or another experiment mixing the two gone haywire?

Sayyaf bandits back in business

(From page A1)

Sipadan dive resort.

But that was only about 300 km southwest of the island of Jolo, where the Abu Sayyaf has hideouts in the hills.

All but one of those kidnapped last year have been freed or released, several in exchange for ransoms of up to $1 million.

Then President Joseph Estrada lost patience with the time-consuming negotiations after Abu Sayyaf splinter groups began to kidnap even more hostages.

Last September, Estrada ordered a frontal military assault on Abu Sayyaf bases on Jolo, 960 km south of Manila. Many of the kidnap victims were rescued or managed to escape.

Estrada's successor, President Macapagal-Arroyo, ordered a renewed assault on the Abu Sayyaf in April after the rebels threatened to behead an American hostage. The hostage, Jeffrey Schilling, was rescued less than a week later when an Army patrol clashed with a group of Abu Sayyaf bandits who fled leaving their captive behind.

Slipped away

According to military officials, about 250 bandits were killed in the assault and over 200 captured. But hundreds slipped away from Jolo or melted into the local population.

Officials say the Abu Sayyaf—which is awash in cash—can still command the loyalty of about 1,000 men.

Despite Ms Macapagal's threat to completely vanquish the rebel group and give them "the peace of the graveyard," officials privately admit the Abu Sayyaf cannot be stamped out.

Enormous poverty, little scope for employment and a local tradition of guns, piracy and kidnapping draw many youth of the Sulu islands to the Abu Sayyaf, which also carries the cachet of fighting for Islam.

Only some 5 percent of the country's 75 million people are Muslim, but they mostly live in impoverished areas of Mindanao.

The Abu Sayyaf is one of two groups demanding a Moro homeland, but appears to do little other than kidnap and engage in vicious internecine battles.

The other group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, is currently holding peace talks with the government. The MILF is based in Central Mindanao.

Marites Vitug, a journalist who has co-authored a book on the Moro rebellion, says the Abu Sayyaf can withstand enormous pressure.

In earlier generations, the people of the Sulu region fought Spanish and American colonizers, the Japanese during World War II and the Philippine government after independence.

"They can blend with the people and the terrain, they can cross the sea at dead of night, it's second nature to them," Vitug says. "They can hold out . . . they can flee."

Replay?

Unless security forces pounce on the Abu Sayyaf kidnappers quickly, the abduction of 20 people at the Dos Palmas resort may be a replay of last year's hostage crisis, according to analysts.

"Sad to say but we have the recipe" to fuel kidnapping as an industry, says retired Lt. Gen. Alfred Filler.

"Why here in the Philippines and not other Southeast Asian nations? Well, maybe because we are a freewheeling democracy and this kidnapping-for-ransom is seen as an easier money-making venture than farming or fishing, for example," says the former Armed Forces intelligence chief.

"The people have the means to do it," Filler says, referring to assorted firearms easily available in the Mindanao black market.

He says a key factor that propelled the country to its unenviable position of being Asia's kidnapping capital is the lack of government resources to enforce law and order in the vast archipelago.

Also, he adds, there is poverty and lack of education as well as the negative influence of sea piracy, which has remained a key problem in the country since time immemorial.

Cases of kidnapping occur almost about weekly not only in Mindanao but in other parts of the country. Politicians, schoolchildren and businessmen, especially Chinese-Filipino traders, are often the targets of gangs who ask anything from a few pesos to millions of dollars.

In the recent May 14 elections, for instance, a candidate claimed she was kidnapped and released only after she was declared to have lost in the polls.

President Macapagal even charged that the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force set up by her deposed predecessor had engaged in "Hollywood stage-managed kidnapping."

Ms Macapagal said the PAOCTF had tricked Chinese-Filipinos into paying protection money. She later disbanded the powerful task force that was set up in 1998 to combat kidnap gangs.

Despite the government's efforts, the Abu Sayyaf's high-profile kidnappings last year remain etched in the minds of many foreigners, according to a Western diplomat.

The Abu Sayyaf took hostages from Germany, Malaysia, France, Lebanon, United States and South Africa and negotiated for ransoms for their release from their stronghold in Jolo. *Reports from Reuters and AFP*

Roco offers 2 cents worth on kidnap

(From page A1)

in the tourism industry?

Either of these two groups was behind the abduction of 20 people at the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan, Education Secretary Raul Roco said yesterday.

Whatever their real motive, according to Roco, they're not "ordinary kidnappers."

But two of Roco's former colleagues in the Senate were quick to blame the military and police for failing to prevent the abduction.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. expressed surprise over how the Abu Sayyaf could continue to terrorize the country despite military operations against it.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, on the other hand, said the kidnapping indicated not only a failure in intelligence, but also a "failure in operations" on the part of the military and police.

"There were reportedly intelligence reports showing that they will attack not Davao, but Palawan," Biazon said.

Roco said the abduction was definitely perpetrated by "anti-government forces" out to destabilize the Macapagal administration.

"The intention is to create a political issue or political instability so that the tourists will not come here. So whoever did that must be . . . enemies of the state. There's a political agenda," he said.

The kidnappers were not after money but merely wanted to sow a security nightmare in the island resort, he added.

Roco said another possibility was that the country's "competitors" in the tourism industry could have masterminded the abduction.

The Palawan abduction was the second attack on a major tourist destination in less than a week. On May 22, gunmen attacked Pearl Farm, a tourist resort off Davao City, killing two persons and taking two hostages who were later released.

Roco pointed out that the Palawan kidnapping could not have been instigated by ordinary kidnappers as it would have been "a foolish attempt."

"Why will you indiscriminately kidnap 20? They have different capacities to pay," Roco said. "If you're guarding 20 people, and you're the one who has to feed them, it would be foolish. Some of them could not pay."

Pimentel is asking for a Senate inquiry into how the military spent its intelligence funds and why it failed to anticipate the next attack of the Abu Sayyaf.

"I thought we already crushed all the Abu Sayyaf, but they are still very much around. The military authorities should explain what happened," Pimentel said.

"Imagine, we unleashed the full force of the government's might in Basilan and Sulu at the height of the Abu Sayyaf kidnapping. And now we have to go through the same experience again," he said.

Biazon said the kidnapping case would be a "major test" on the Macapagal administration's no-ransom policy.

"It is important for this administration not to allow the payment of ransom. It must stick to that policy, this is a proven policy internationally. You do not pay ransom to kidnappers or you will encourage the kidnappers to perpetuate their acts," he said.

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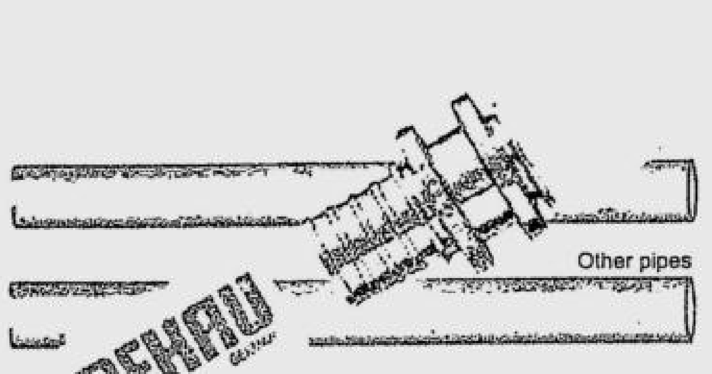

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GMA to Sayyaf: Force with force

(From page A1)

Maria Fe Rosadeno), Sabaya said.

Robot is holding the other 10 Filipinos (Janice Go, Lalaine Chua, Kimberly Jao, Letty Jao, Luis Bautista III, Maria Riza Santos, Reghis Romero, Sonny Daquer, Armando Beyona and Eldren Morales).

Romero, according to an INQUIRER source, is Reghis Romero II, chair of R-2 Builders and the front of fugitive businessman and now Congressman-elect Mark Jimenez in the takeover of the Manila Times in 1999.

The source, a close business associate of Romero, said Romero was at the resort in the company of several Chinese-Filipino businessmen.

'Safe negotiation'

To prove his claim that the outlaw group was behind the latest hostage-taking, Sabaya allowed two males, supposedly Martin Burnham and Raul Recio, to speak on air.

"I, Martin Burnham, with the New Tribes Mission in the Philippines for 15 years, along with my wife Gracia, are in the custody of the Abu Sayyaf Khadafy Janjalani's group. We are safe. Our needs are being met. We would like to appeal for a safe negotiation," the first male voice said.

Another male voice, supposedly that of Raul Recio, editor of Travel Hostel Philippines, made essentially the same appeal.

"Nasa mabuting kalagayan kami ng Abu Sayyaf sa leadership ni Khadafy Janjalani. Sana lang po mag-isip . . . huwag masyadong padalos-dalos sa rescue efforts at mabait naman sila," the supposed Recio said.

Earlier yesterday, Tiglao said the Abu Sayyaf's admission was both a good and bad development—good because it confirmed suspicions and the military could now proceed with pursuit operations, and bad because it indicated that the group was still active and had used the ransom money from its kidnapping binge last year to acquire powerful boats.

'It's obvious that they kidnapped to raise funds. They profited from their operations last year and they want to profit again," Tiglao said in Filipino.

He also said Malacañang was confident that the Macapagal administration would pass this latest "test."

Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said the military was gearing for a new round of assault operations against the Abu Sayyaf.

"This is now a tactical operation," Adan said, citing the Macapagal administration's no-negotiations policy.

He said the Counter-Terrorist Force (CTF), which received training from American counter-terrorism experts, and which was formed in the aftermath of last year's hostage crisis, had been alerted for deployment.

Made up of two companies of elite units from the AFP, the CTF will work together with battle-tested Marines, Adan said.

"Our forces will fix and cordon the area and launch the assault," he said. "The safety of the hostages will, of course, be considered."

No demand

Sabaya aired no demand in exchange for the hostages' freedom.

Speaking in Filipino, he said it was up to the government to act as it supposedly already knew his group's grievances. But he warned that his group could hurt the hostages.

Sabaya denied that the Abu Sayyaf was behind the May 22 attack on the Barcelo Pearl Farm Resort in the Island Garden City of Samal, wherein two people were killed and three others were wounded.

The Southern Command received reports on the landing of three vessels in a beach near Umus Matuha and Buan Islands, some 10 nautical miles north of Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi.

Southcom spokesperson Lt. Col. Danilo Servando said Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi Mayor Abul Pata reported the vessels' landing at 10:15 p.m. Sunday.

A Philippine Air Force Nomad plane that conducted a reconnaissance flight sighted three sea craft—a green *kumpit* (speedboat) with some 25 passengers, a fishing boat with nipa roofing and four passengers, and a "dirty white" speedboat with two passengers—in the Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi area around 5:15 p.m. Sunday.

Southcom chief Lt. Gen. Gregorio Camiling had directed Task Force Comet, led by Brig. Gen. Romeo Dominquez, to pursue the bandits and prevent their possible escape to Sulu or any other island in Western Mindanao.

"Our primary concern is the safety of the hostages, and the military is doing its best to rescue them," Servando said.

Members of the Navy's Task Force 61 and the 2nd Marine Brigade were also ordered to set up blocking forces.

Brig. Gen. Nelson Eslao, commander of the PAF Tactical Operations Wing, said his command had intensified aerial surveillance.

Missionaries

Martin and Gracia Burnham have been spreading God's word in the Philippines for 15 years.

They are two of the 3,000 missionaries of the New Tribes Mission (NTM), a Florida-based organization that aims to spread the Gospel among tribal peoples that have no access to it.

According to the NTM website, the Burnhams have been with the organization since 1985 and in the Philippines since March 1986.

They were in Palawan to do some work at a mission station in Puerto Princesa.

The Burnhams have three children, but they were not in Dos Palmas at the time of the abduction.

Martin's parents, Paul and Oreta Burnham, are also NTM missionaries in the Philippines. There are several other NTM missionaries in the country.

The NTM said it had no reason to suspect that Martin and Gracia were in any danger in Palawan because there had been no previous reports of terrorist activity there.

It asked the people to pray for the speedy resolution of the hostage situation and for the safety for all involved, including the Burnhams. It also prayed for the wisdom of military officials involved in the operation.

"Pray also for those who took these people hostage. They are in need of God, too," it said.

According to the NTM, there are around 1,000 tribes worldwide that need the Gospel, 350 tribes not reached by it and 2,100 with no access to it.

The organization evangelizes to tribal peoples by translating the Scriptures and seeing indigenous New Testament churches established.

It was founded in 1942 by Paul Fleming and five others.

In its vision statement, the NTM said it is committed to the task of spreading God's word to tribal peoples "because we are committed to God."

"This is a cause worth living for, even dying for, because He is worthy," it said.

The NTM has missions in Bolivia, Brazil, Columbia, Greenland, Guinea, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Mexico, Mongolia, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, the Philippines, Russia, Senegal, Thailand and Venezuela. ***With reports from Stella O. Gonzales, Carlito Pablo and Gil Cabacungan Jr.***

'They struck so fast . . . nobody knew what happened'

(From page A1)

They "introduced themselves as soldiers," said resort manager Allan Fabian. "They struck so fast without any firing of guns, nobody even knew what happened. We only knew about it 10 minutes later."

The men moved into position outside most of the 10 cottages on stilts where tourists slept over the bay's azure waters.

Fabian said the gunmen chose only the units with air-conditioning units running, a sign they were occupied.

A volley of booted kicks bashed open the doors. A rifle butt shattered a window. The vacationers inside, still sleeping off a day of snorkeling, paddling and fishing, awoke to hushed commands at gunpoint.

Roundup

Less than 25 minutes after their stealthy landing, the attackers had rounded up 23 tourists and resort staffers and bundled them aboard a covered speedboat. Fabian said some of the hostages were roughed up a little if they resisted.

Worried about their sagging waterline, the gunmen shoved three resort cooks back on shore, turned on one of their engines and headed south with their captives. They included three Americans and two children, whose mother was not taken. She awaited news anxiously Monday at the resort.

Fabian, who interviewed all of the remaining guests and staffers, said the resort accountant, who hid in her beach hut as the attackers smashed her window for a glance inside, sounded the alarm as the sound of engine faded into the distance.

Within 20 minutes, the police and military were scrambling to put helicopters and reconnaissance planes into the air. The tropical sun already had illuminated the dozens of palm-fringed islands, coral reefs, sandbars, fishing boats and ferries in the Mindanao Sea.

Fabian said the attackers used maps and compasses to reach the vicinity of the island, then abducted two fishermen and forced them to serve as guides to the resort. The fishermen were forced off at Dos Palmas to make room for the hostages.

Fabian said the abductors spoke Tausug, the same dialect used by the Abu Sayyaf bandits who kidnapped 10 foreign tourists and 11 workers from a Malaysian resort 13 months ago.

Only 39 remain

On Monday, only 39 of the resort's 113 guests remained. Police in brown fatigues, wielding assault rifles from the shadows of the coconut palms, watched as a few children splashed around in brightly colored plastic canoes above a group of one-meter-long black-tipped sharks.

Thirty-four guests left the tropical paradise within two hours Monday. Among the latest departures was a French doctor assigned with France's mission in Manila.

She and her husband and two children boarded a helicopter sent here by a French frigate on a goodwill mission to the Philippines, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon told the Agence France Presse.

Their identities were not disclosed for security reasons. The French Embassy's military attaché and three French soldiers accompanied the family out of Arreceffi, Gordon said.

"We trust the local authorities here and we are just providing support for our nationals," French defense attaché Philippe Groult said on Sunday.

Journalists' tour

A group of journalists allowed into the island at mid-morning of Monday saw deserted white-sand beaches and guest cottages surrounded by manicured lawns, flower beds and coconut groves. Each small building was guarded by soldiers or police armed with assault rifles.

There were no tourists in sight, except for four Filipino guests apparently on their way to the beach. Hotel staff prevented journalists from interviewing guests during the brief guided tour.

"It doesn't mean that they (kidnappers) have won. I am certain that we can rebound," Gordon said. "I would certainly like to see this resort teeming with tourists again."

Fabian said each of the remaining guests was asked immediately after the raid whether they wanted to leave or stay behind.

"Many of them had just woken up and did not know anything" about the early morning raid, he said.

Fabian insisted there had been no cancellations of bookings, which include one from a World Bank delegation due to arrive here on May 31.

But Fabian said the resort was now "discouraging" further reservations.

The hotel charges P10,000 for a two-night stay in one of the 50 rooms, and the staff said the resort enjoyed average annual occupancy rate of about 60 percent.

"We expect occupancy to go down after the raid," Fabian said. ***Inquirer wires***

RESORT offers very little of regular fare. REUTERS

A get-away-from-it-all paradise

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—The upscale beach resort from where 20 people, mostly tourists, were kidnapped on Sunday was a get-away-from-it-all paradise—until the Abu Sayyaf came.

Dos Palmas on Arreceffi Island lies in the most unspoiled region in the country with beautiful beaches, virgin mangrove forests, a wildlife sanctuary and an underground river.

The resort, named after the island's two 80-foot palm trees, is one of the most popular destinations in Palawan.

It prides itself in offering very little of the regular fare of most beach resorts. There are no newspapers, no telephones and only two televisions—in the two bars.

Palawan's capital, Puerto Princesa, is about an hour's boat ride away.

Landscaped gardens with over 150 varieties of plants dot the 20-hectare island and many of the residential cottages are built on stilts over the water.

It was from one cluster of such cottages that Abu Sayyaf gunmen seized 20 people, including three Americans, early on Sunday. Ten of the victims were women, one was an 8-year-old boy.

Dos Palmas is popular with visitors from Manila and even further afield for the opportunities it offers to do very little.

One recent visitor said the most strenuous activity, apart from beach volleyball, was the 45-minute kayaking trip around the island.

Because of its remote location, there has traditionally been very little security at Dos Palmas.

There was some concern after Abu Sayyaf bandits kidnapped tourists from a resort in nearby Malaysia last year and threatened to make similar raids on Palawan and the island of Boracay in Western Visayas. *Reuters*

Security reinforced in resorts

(From page A1)

issued strongly worded warnings to their citizens traveling to the Philippines.

"The perception in peace and order and security is the first casualty" in the latest hostage-taking attack early Sunday at the Dos Palmas Arreceffi Island Resort in Palawan, said acting Foreign Affairs Secretary Franklin Ebdalin.

"It would be difficult to explain that it took place in just a part of the Philippines, and not the whole country," Ebdalin said of the incident wherein 20 hostages, including three Americans, were taken.

Speaking in Filipino in a radio interview, Tiglao admitted that "this is what really hurts—because of a small group, the country's image is damaged."

"What we should do is double time and ensure the security of the resorts in Palawan," he said.

Tiglao told reporters that the Navy's patrol boats could cruise at around 25 knots but that the *kumpit* (speedboat) used by the Dos Palmas hostage-takers could go up to 40 knots.

He said the *kumpit* was equipped with three Volvo engines—each worth P1-2 million—and a .50 cal machine gun.

"This kind of patrol boat is armed to confront even Navy ships," he said.

Tiglao said the Department of Transportation and Communications was included in the inter-agency unit "because there's a pending plan by the DOTC to increase its patrol boats."

"But what the President wants is to get the private sector to help out in securing these fast patrol boats," he said.

Advisories

In a May 27 advisory posted on its website, the US State Department advised Americans to exercise great caution when traveling to resorts in Palawan and Mindanao and to "avoid all travel to the southern and western areas" of Mindanao and the nearby islands of Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

"There is concern that the ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group) or other groups may take additional actions against US citizens and other foreigners," it said.

It also noted the May 1 siege of Malacañang by supporters of ex-President Joseph Estrada, the Dec. 30 bombings in Metro Manila and the May 22 attack on the Barcelo Pearl Farm Resort in Davao as part of the "violent incidents (that) call for Americans to exercise extreme caution throughout the Philippines."

The British Foreign Ministry advised British nationals to take precautions in view of the piracy and robbery attacks on ships in and around Philippine waters.

"Visitors who take part in water sports and scuba diving in the Philippines should be aware that rescue services are not always as comprehensive as they might be in the UK," it said.

It also warned its nationals "to avoid strangers offering drinks or confectionery as these may be laced with substances that cause drowsiness or unconsciousness," allowing for the victim to be robbed.

The Swedish government condemned the hostage-taking and said it had issued a "general advisory" to its nationals to exercise caution in Palawan and the southern and western parts of Mindanao.

Chinese Embassy spokesperson Wang Luo said the incident at Dos Palmas was "unfortunate" and expressed concern for the safety of the hostages.

"We believe the Philippine government will take measures to solve these problems as soon as possible," Wang said.

But the incident did not deter a group of four Germans from flying to the Philippines to go diving in Tubbataha Reef near Palawan.

The Germans, who arrived yesterday afternoon aboard Singapore Airlines, said they had heard of the kidnapping but were going ahead with their plans.

"In your life there is danger. It happened in Egypt. It could happen anywhere. It could also happen to me, but the place is not important," kindergarten teacher Birgit El Friede, a first-time visitor, said in an interview.

El Friede said she and her companions would stay for two days in Palawan and then travel by boat to Tubbataha Reef, where they planned to go diving for nine days.

Tubbataha Reef lies in the Sulu Celebes area 192 kilometers southeast of Puerto Princesa City. It is the country's first marine park and has been declared by Unesco as a world natural heritage site.

Security

In Puerto Princesa, Gordon and Southern Tagalog tourism director Louella Jurilla called all hotel and resort owners and managers to a meeting at Hotel Fleuris to discuss additional security measures.

Other local tourism stakeholders were also present at the meeting.

"Tourism is not only the responsibility of the government. We are going to fight back. We are not going to just lie down and say 'we give up'," said Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes.

At the latest count, there are 20 island resorts and cottages in the province—two in Puerto Princesa, two in Southern Palawan and 14 in Northern Palawan.

"We are determined to continue operations in the island because we believe that Palawan has potential in terms of tourist attractions," said Dos Palmas spokesperson Allan Fabian.

Security has also been tightened at Aklan's famed Boracay island.

Aklan Gov. Florencio Miraflores said he had instructed the police, military, Coast Guard and other law enforcement agencies to take preemptive measures in and around Boracay. ***With reports from Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Odon S. Bandiola, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Stock index falls below 1,400 level

(From page A1)

vestment analyst.

The main index closed down 15.11 points, or 1.07 percent, at 1,395.12. Turnover was light at P411.92 million, down from P1.06 billion last Friday.

On Sunday, Abu Sayyaf bandits seized 20 people, including three Americans, from the Dos Palmas resort off Puerto Princesa. Five days earlier, armed men attacked the Pearl Farm resort off Davao City.

Trade Secretary Manual "Mar" Roxas II yesterday admitted that the raids on upscale resorts in the Philippines were a big blow to the country's tourism and investment promotion program.

"The events in Palawan will have a serious impact particularly on tourism and investment promotion as seen from the fallout from the Sipadan incident last year," Roxas said. "We just have to continue telling the world that these are only isolated events."

Abu Sayyaf gunmen raided the Malaysian diving resort of Sipadan, off the Sabah coast, on April 23 last year and fled to their Jolo island stronghold with 10 Western tourists and 11 resort workers.

Roxas was in Thailand for an investment promotion last week when news broke out that 25 gunmen attacked the Pearl Farm resort.

"It was difficult to make a presentation on the country when major foreign media outlets such as CNN, BBC and CNBC were showing reports of the damage and casualties in the raid on Pearl Farm," Roxas said.

The early morning raid on Dos Palmas resort off Puerto Princesa City likewise caused some ripples on the ongoing Philippine investment mission in Europe.

The 13-day, seven-city European investment mission is aimed at showcasing investment opportunities in information technology in the Philippines.

But the attacks on upscale resorts have further raised foreign investors' worries not only on the risks to their capital but also on their personal safety.

Roxas said that based on the feedback from members of the Philippine IT Euromission, businessmen in Europe were concerned about the security situation in the Philippines.

Special session

Traders said jitters over the outcome of a four-day special session in Congress to debate the power reform bill also pressured share prices.

Sentiment had previously been battered by the attack on Malacañang on May 1.

Eagle Equities president Joey Roxas said that investors had been slightly unnerved by civic sector groups, which were trying to convince Congress not to pass the power bill. Civil society groups claim that the passage of the bill would result in excessive and unfair costs on consumers.

"I see it (passage of the bill) as a test of whether President Macapagal-Arroyo can control the Senate and House of Representatives," Roxas said.

He said the hit on prices from the latest kidnapping was likely to be a one-day event. He predicted the main index holding at 1,380 points in the coming days. ***Reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Reuters***

PBL Q'FINALS

Ana eyes key win vs Giv

STANDINGS	W	L
Group A		
Shark	9	2
Welcoat	7	3
Ana	6	3
Giv	6	4
Group B		
PharmaQuick	7	4
Hapee	6	5
Montaña	3	8
Osaka	2	9
Ateneo-Pioneer	2	10

GAMES TODAY *(Makati Coliseum)*
3:30 p.m.—PharmaQuick vs Montaña Pawnshop
5:30 p.m.—Giv Beauty Soap vs Ana Freezer

ANA tries to recover lost ground when it clashes with Giv Beauty Soap today in the PBL Chairman's Cup quarterfinals at the Makati Coliseum.

Losers of their last two games, the Freezer Kings are hard-pressed to prevail over the Giv dribblers in order to keep pace with second-running and defending champions Welcoat Paintmasters.

The Ana-Giv game is set 5:30 p.m. PharmaQuick, aiming to cement its frontrunning slate in Group B, tackles Montaña Pawnshop in the curtain-raiser at 3:30 p.m.

Ana and Giv are trying to avoid finishing fourth in Group A in order to escape a playoff with the Group A topnotcher for a semifinals seat.

"I hope that our twin losses will inspire the team to bounce back mightily," said Ana skipper and assistant playing coach Rey Mendez. Ana got blown out by Welcoat and Shark in their last two games.

Mendez and company must put their act together in order to have a chance against the Soap Experts. Leading Ana's charge are Paul Artadi, Dondon Mendoza, Robin Mendoza, Ronald Tubid, Ariel Capus and Roland Pascual.

Giv pins its hopes on Egay Billones, Eric de la Cuesta, Edwin Bacani and Marlon Legaspi.

With the prolific Bruce Dacia, PharmaQuick is routing the opposition in Group B. Also shining for the Sandy Javier-owned squad are Omanzie Rodriguez, Leo Avenido and Chico Lanete, a rookie pointguard from Lyceum.

San Sebastian scores

SAN Sebastian College bared its sharpest form yet in a 107-51 trouncing of National College of Business and Arts yesterday in the 1st Sen. Ambrosio Padilla Memorial Cup basketball tournament at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. The Stags, many time NCAA champions, were lackluster at the start and led NCBA by only nine points at halftime, 40-31.

Ateneo-La Salle golf tourney tomorrow

PROTECTING school pride will be the foremost aim when a field of no less than 400 golfers compete in the 14th edition of the Ateneo-La Salle Golf Classic tomorrow and Thursday at the north and south courses of the Canlubang Golf and Country Club.

The participating cast in the tourney sponsored by PLDT, Smart, Union Bank Visa and National Sports Grill will be made up of alumni, present students of both universities including provincial affiliates from all over the country going for the big points in eight different categories.

Ateneo is defending the team title it won in the narrowest of margins last year: a one-point victory that gave them possession of the Ambassador Carlos Valdes permanent trophy.

Another win this year will put Ateneo just a win from keeping permanent possession of the Ambassador Valdes trophy, a grand slam feat that remains to be achieved as either teams only went as far as repeating in the last 13 years.

First on the tees tomorrow are those in the newly introduced 19 years and below bracket as well as the 30-39 age-group who will play the north. Those in the 20-29 class and lady participants will tackle the south. The next day, the 50-59 and 60-65 participants will be at the north and those in the 40-49 and 66 years play the south.

Watson triumphs

PARAMUS, New Jersey—Tom Watson shot a 5-under-par 67 Sunday to win the $ 2 million Senior PGA Championship by one shot over Jim Thorpe.

Thorpe, who missed three birdie putts of less than 3 meters (10 feet) on the back nine, had a chance to force a playoff. *AP*

SPORTSWATCH

Brazilians 1-2 in Indy 500

INDIANAPOLIS —Roger Penske climbed into Victory Lane again at the Indianapolis 500, this time on the back of a young Spiderman from Brazil. Helio Castroneves led a dominant pack of stars back to auto racing's biggest event and then celebrated by climbing the fence in his best Spiderman impersonation. It is his trademark in Indy racing's rival league but a new sight at the 500, boycotted for the past five years by most of the top teams and drivers from Championship Auto Racing Teams. Castroneves and fellow Brazilian Gil de Ferran gave team owner Penske a 1-2 finish and CART a sweep of the top five. *AP*

'Schu' cruises to 5th victory

MONTE CARLO, Monaco —For Michael Schumacher, it was a matter of finishing the race safely. For David Coulthard, it was a matter of just getting started. Coulthard, sitting on pole, stalled at the start of the formation lap for the Monaco Grand Prix when the electronic launch control device of his McLaren-Mercedes malfunctioned. He was relegated to the back of the pack. That opened the way for Schumacher at the front of the starting grid and the three-time defending champion took full advantage of the unexpected opportunity to cruise to his fifth victory on Formula One's most demanding circuit. Leading virtually from start to finish in the 78-lap race, except for five laps (55-60) following his pit stop, Schumacher cruised home to pace a 1-2 Ferrari finish, with Brazilian teammate Rubens Barrichello 0.4 seconds behind him. *AP*

Sy, Cabalinan rule kartfest

MIKE Sy ended months of frustrations with a smashing victory, even as Jeff Cabalinan made it two in a row in the fourth leg of the 2001 Shell Super Karting Championships at the Carmona Racing Circuit here last Sunday. Sy, whose previous best finish was runner-up in the third leg on April 8, survived the challenge of Angelo Barreto and Lee Bumgarner to emerge as the surprise winner in the Demvel's Formula 125—one of the featured events in this annual series sponsored by Shell, Nokia, Match Box/Hot Wheels, Coca-Cola, Bridgestone and Eastway Racing. Sy clocked 20:21.927 against Barreto's 20:22.040 and Bumgarner's 20:22.156. Also finishing in the top five were Bert Neuhof, who finished fourth in 20:39.842; and Juha Roiha, who wound up fifth with 20:43.142. Bumgarner, however, posted the day's fastest lap time of 46.640 in the 11th lap. Overshadowed by Sy's resounding win was Cabalinan, who edged Manuel Mayo and Mon Tanjuatco to become the first back-to-back winner in the equally exciting Formula Super A category.

Baltao watercross tilt champion

SUBIC—Carlo Baltao launched his serious bid for the coveted Rider of the Year Award when he ruled the 4th 99.5RT FM Watercross Challenge yesterday at the Waterfront Beach Boardwalk here. Baltao, last year's runner-up, emerged the lone rider to post a perfect feat of 120 points in the Super Stock Expert Runabout 785 class in this event sponsored by 99.5 RT FM through the support of Magnolia Ice Tee, Pringles, Petron, SBMA, Subic Bay Aqua Sports, Tabata Sports Sandals and Boating World Makati. BJ Ang, the youngest rider at 16 who was just elevated to the Expert class this year, upstaged the veterans as he finished second overall, while Pagadian City native Rene Pamaran snatched third place. Pulling a bigger surprise was lone female rider Wacky del Rosario who ruled the usually male-dominated Super Stock Expert Runabout 1200 class for the fastest jet skis.

Davenport out of French Open

PARIS —Lindsay Davenport joined three other top players on the sideline Sunday at the French Open before the tournament even started. Davenport, who hasn't played a match since March, withdrew on the eve of the event after aggravating a bone bruise in her right knee during practice. Sidelined earlier because of injuries were three-time champion Monica Seles, defending champion Mary Pierce and Anna Kournikova. Davenport was seeded third in the French. *AP*

Petron GP resumes with 2 rounds Sunday

AFTER a one-month break, the 2001 Petron Grand Prix resumes with the fifth and sixth rounds this Sunday, June 3, at the Subic International Raceway.

Top competition drivers, led by Ferdinand Ong of Rota-Speedwelle-Outlast Battery and Kookie Ramirez of Petron-SRA, return to the starting grid with renewed enthusiasm in the centerpiece Blaze super saloon championship.

Ong dominated three of the first four races, while Ramirez won one to take the headstart in this annual series organized by Sports Values Inc. in cooperation with Petron.

Four other equally talented drivers—Mike Aguilar, Nilo Pazcoguin, Louie Ramirez and Benedict de la Cruz—are also expected to figure prominently in the battle for top honors.

"Like in the previous four races, we expect another tight battle this weekend," said SVI president and last year's overall champion Pocholo Ramirez.

The third and fourth rounds were originally scheduled on May 13, but Ramirez decided to postpone them to a later date due to the recent national elections.

For details, call Estela Casibang at the SVI secretariat in Pasig City at tel. 671-6926 or Sheila Reyes in Olongapo at (6347) 252-6988.

Mandaluyong derby on

THE MID-YEAR *sabong* spectacle highly awaited by cockfighting fans—the Mandaluyong Coliseum 9-Cock International Derby— starts at 5 p.m. today featuring more than 65 fights in the 2-cock first day elimination round. Derby hosts are Vic Yu and engineer Sonny Lagon, while major sponsor is Pagcor-Casino Filipino.

The second day of eliminations (3-cock) is slated on Thursday, May 31, while the all-important championship round (4-cock) blasts off on Saturday, June 2.

Paying patrons are advised to keep their ticket stub since they may exchange these stubs for complimentary Casino Filipino bonus bet certificate equivalent to the ticket price at the Concierge section of all Metro Manila Pagcor-Casino Filipino branch until June 15.

Local participants are up against 15 entries fielded by Americans Richard Wilburn, Jerry Douglas, Bobby Jones (Texas), Buddy Mann (Alabama) and Chuck Berry (Oklahoma) who ruled the Mandaluyong 9-Cock International Derby in January. Also seeing action are Jun Marasigan of Saipan, and Fil-Ams Romeo Arciaga, Armando Santos, and Dr. Noni Marquez of California.

For inquiries, please contact 534-4110, 531-4003, 535-2341 and 531-4005.

'Idol' pockets top award

PATRICK "Idol" Antonio captured the United Cockers Association of the Philippines (Ucap) Cocker of the Year 2001 title last week during the PB San Pablo Sagupaan Guts and Glory 6-Cock Derby at Mandaluyong Coliseum after his entry Sagupaan Starwars posted the highest score among 34 contenders.

After 13 Ucap-supported cockfests, Sagupaan Starwars garnered a total of 57 points. It was a double victory for Antonio last week since his other entry, Sagupaan Winning Line, emerged as one of five co-champions.

It was the third COY title for Antonio, who also bagged the NCA (Araneta Coliseum) and Ucap Cocker of the Year honors in 1998 and 1999 respectively.

"Anyone could be a champion. The techniques lie in the training, feeding and conditioning," said Antonio, who is also host of the Sagupaan tele-*sabong* show on IBC-Channel 13 every Thursday, 11:30 p.m.

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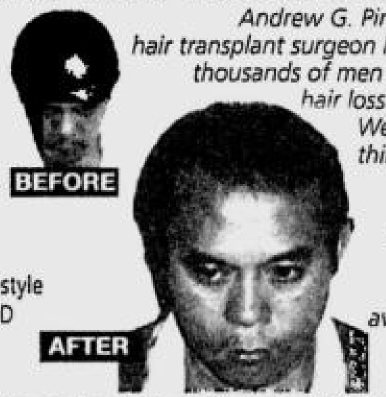
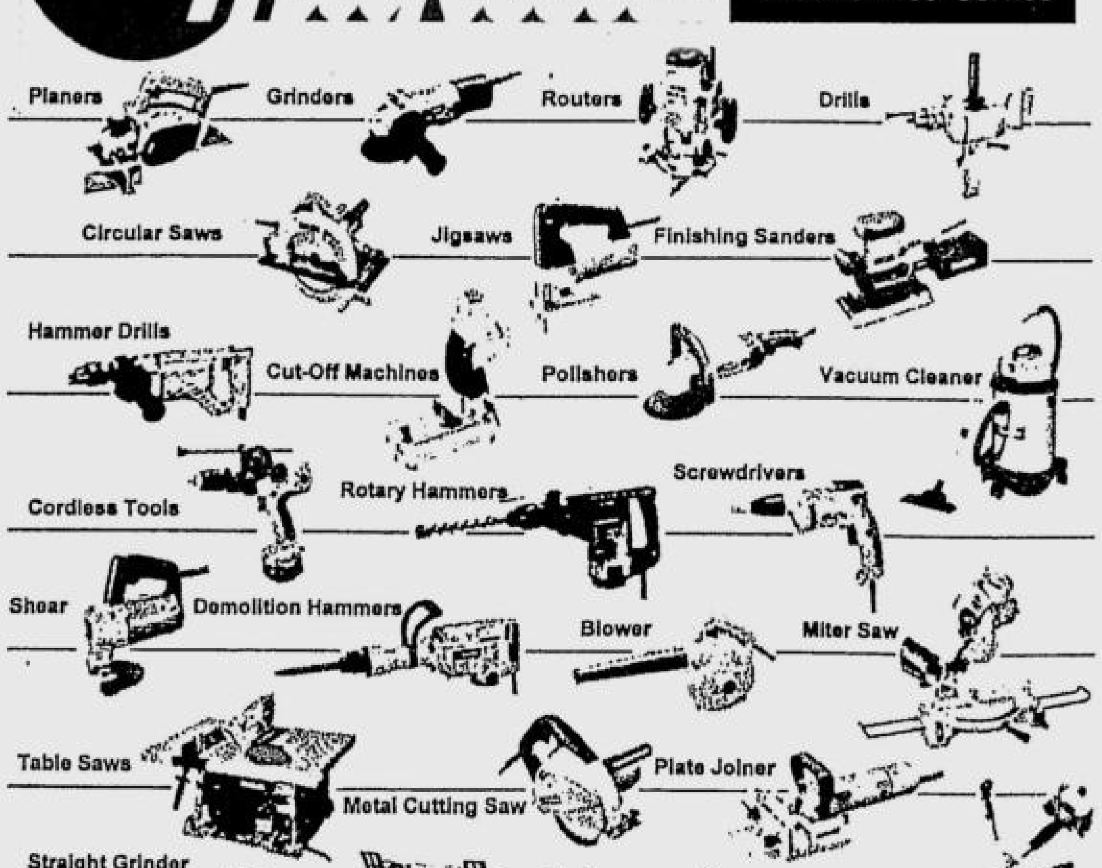


MAPUA TECH ALUMNI SETS YUCHENGCO GOLF CUP MAY 30 AT SOUTHWOODS

The Ambassador Alfonso T. Yuchengco NAMA Golf Cup competition will be held tomorrow, Wednesday, May 30, 2001, at the Legends Course of Manila Southwoods. Tee-off starts at 7:30 a.m. The Mechanical Engineering Alumni Association of Mapua Institute of Technology (MEAAMIT) is hosting the Yuchengco Golf Cup for the National Association of Mapua Alumni (NAMA). It will be the first major golf event for Mapuans and for friends of Mapuans. It is presented by the Yuchengco Group of Companies and sponsored by Smart Communications, Inc., Eastern Telecoms, Teleglobe International, Concert, and MCI WorldCom Philippines, Inc.

MEAAMIT, led by its Past President and Adviser, Engineer Antonio Ro. Herrera, its President, Engineer Lemecio S. Roxas, and its Director and NAMA PRO, Engineer Fernando G. Castillo, announced that the Yuchengco Cup will feature team and individual competitions. Big and valuable raffle prizes await all the participants. Siemens will raffle off its state-of-the-art, *Siemens SL 45,* cell phone, while Electrobus Consolidated is offering their top-of-the-line, *Callaway ERC II Big Bertha,* driver for the first hole-in-one. In the event no one makes a hole in one, this major prize will be raffled off during the awarding ceremonies. For more information, call telephone 812-6947 or send a fax message to 810-5374, or email to fgcastillo@mapua.com



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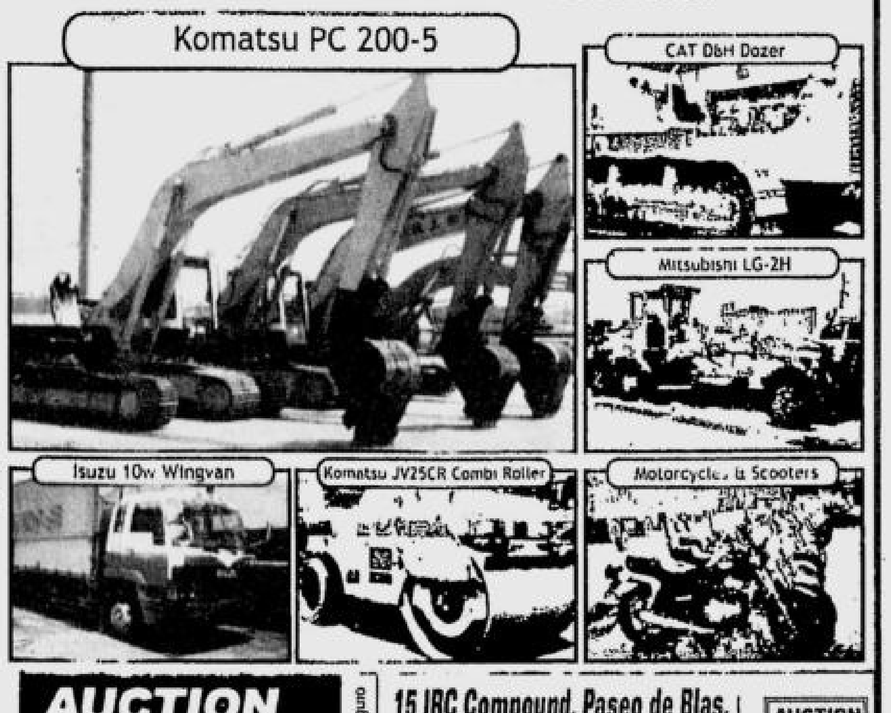
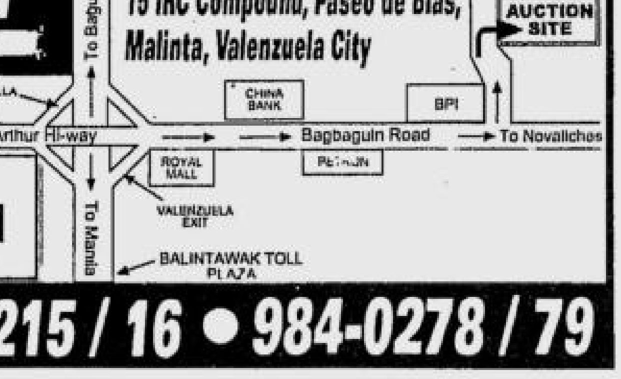
AUCTION SITE # 2
15 IRC Compound, Paseo de Blas,
Malinta, Valenzuela City
AUCTION DATES:
May 30, 2001
INSPECTION SITE# 2

Tel. #: 984-0215 / 16 • 984-0278 / 79



NORTH Expressway
Meycauayan Exit
EVER MEMORIAL GARDENS
AIM SITE
EAST SERVICE ROAD
Lawang Bato Temporary Exit
To Baguio
VALENZUELA EXIT
To Mc Arthur Hi-way
ROYAL MALL
To Manila
VALENZUELA EXIT



SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▣ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

zed

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Jalasco out of BAP polls

By JUNE NAVARRO

FED up with the Basketball Association of the Philippines' internal wranglings, Freddie Jalasco has decided not to seek another term as president of the association.

Instead, Jalasco said, acting BAP president Gonzalo "Lito" Puyat would vie for the position against Quinteliano "Tiny" Literal, the leader of the other BAP faction.

"I don't want to involve myself in this problem. As I've said, if they don't want me, I'm willing to step down," said Jalasco, who took a leave of absence two months ago.

The election is set on June 7 at the penthouse of the Manila Bank building in Makati City.

Jalasco said 17 out of the 29 voting members have already confirmed their attendance in the elections even though the exercise is threatened by a temporary restraining order filed by Literal last week.

WEST CHAMPIONS

Lakers sweep Spurs

BRYANT

LOS ANGELES—The Los Angeles Lakers completed a 4-0 Western Conference sweep of the San Antonio Spurs with a 111-82 rout on Sunday that put the defending champion back in the NBA Finals.

The mighty one-two punch of Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant landed again, the pair scoring 26 and 24 points respectively, but for a change someone else was the Lakers' high scorer — guard Derek Fisher, who poured in 28 points.

The Lakers won the first two games in San Antonio, then wrapped up the series with two victories at home.

"We went up there, got two at their place and we played great at home and we just wanted to finish it off, and we did that," said O'Neal.

The Spurs, who had the best record in the league during the regular season, were looking to salvage some pride even if they had little hope of taking the series, since no team has ever come back from a 3-0 deficit.

But the merciless Lakers never let them in the game, taking the first quarter by 10 points and the second by 13 to lead 64-41 at the half.

Tim Duncan and Antonio Daniels led San Antonio, the 1999 champions, with 15 points apiece and Avery Johnson came off the bench to add 14 as David Robinson had his third miserable game of the series with 12 points, shooting just 5-of-16 from the floor.

Overall, the Spurs shot 31-for-77 (.403) while the Lakers converted 42-of-86 (.488).

Fisher was 11-of-13, including 6-of-7 from three-point range. The Lakers made 10-for-22 (.455) from beyond the arc while the Spurs, the best long-distance shooters in the league during the regular season, made just 3-of-16 (.188).

Los Angeles out-rebounded San Antonio 54-33.

The Lakers now await the winner of the Eastern Conference finals, where the Milwaukee Bucks lead the Philadelphia 76ers 2-1.

The Lakers had been swept out of the playoffs by San Antonio in 1999. "Today I think we used that as motivation to come out and play harder and stay focused on this team because they did sweep us in '99 so we kind of wanted to return the favor somewhat," said Bryant.

Reuters

Allen seeing action today

MILWAUKEE — Allen Iverson said he will definitely play in today's Game 4 of the Eastern Conference finals.

"I don't feel that much better, but as long as I can run up and down the court I'll be all right," Iverson said Sunday.

The Philadelphia 76ers trail the Milwaukee Bucks 2-1 in the best-of-seven series after losing 80-74 Saturday, as Iverson sat out to rest his sore left hip.

Iverson shot jumpers with his teammates Sunday but did not do any running. Like other members of the team, Iverson had an upbeat attitude that would ordinarily be ill-suited for a team facing the closest thing to a must win.

The 76ers seemed to draw some inspiration from their six-point loss, emerging with a heightened sense of pride for playing such a close game despite the NBA's Most Valuable Player staying behind at the team hotel and watching the game on TV.

"I was so happy with their effort, I couldn't wait for them to get back to the hotel so I could tell them. I almost jumped in a cab," Iverson said.

By the time Game 4 tips off at 2130 GMT Monday, Iverson will have had about 90 hours worth of recuperation.

His injury is officially listed as a left sacroiliac contusion. The sacroiliac joint connects the hip to the buttocks. The injury makes it difficult for Iverson to run—a huge detriment to a player who relies so heavily on speed.

AP

Marlins aiming for semis stint

THE SOCSARGEN Marlins have set for themselves a modest goal in the First Phase of the Metropolitan Basketball Association. If they land in the semifinals, that would be just fine.

Team owner Ben Solon and Coach Boyzie Zamar know where the team stands. Bereft of a corporate sponsor and with few marquee players to boot, they just couldn't hope to topple the league powerhouses just yet.

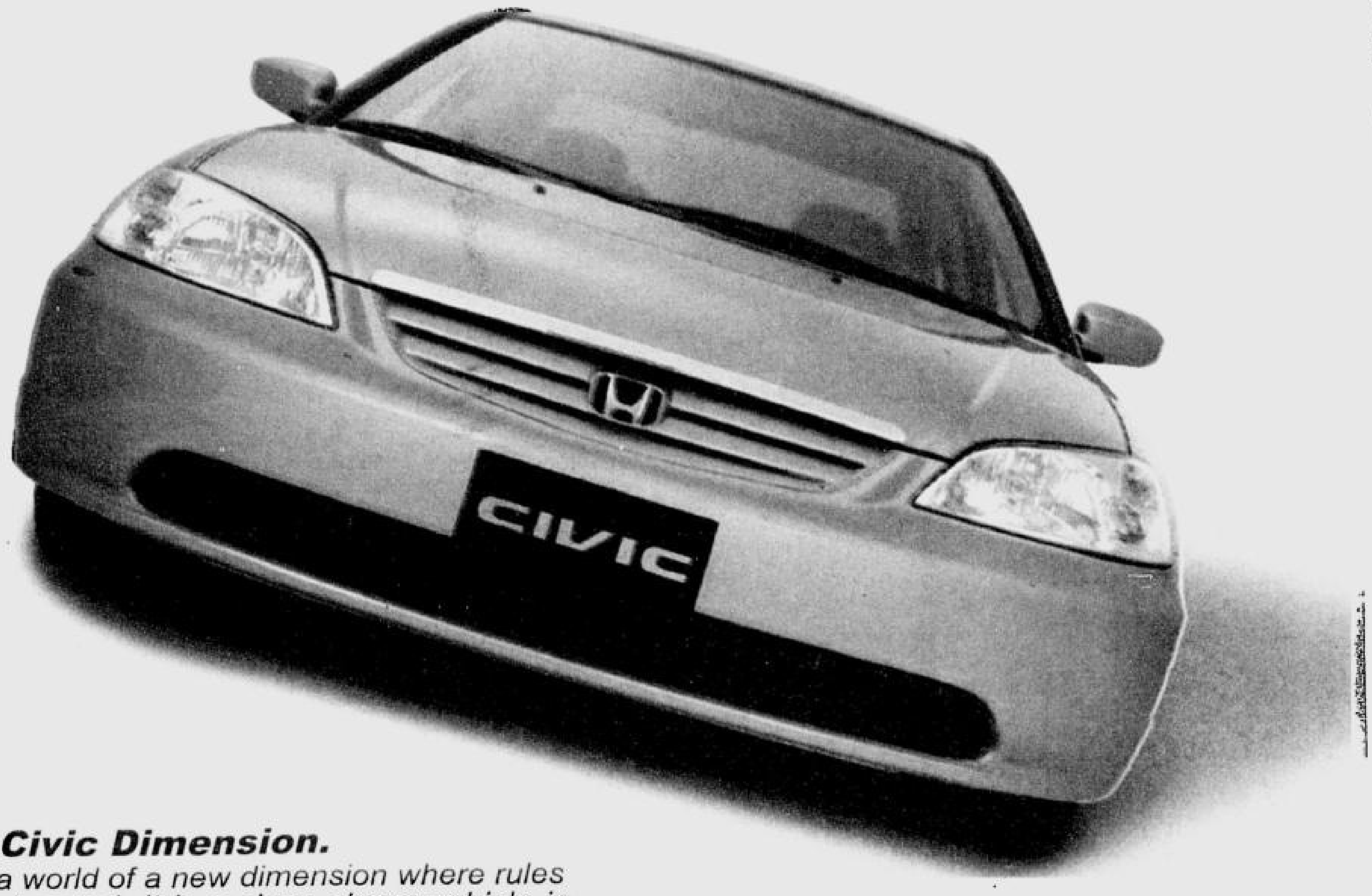
"We have less talent, but more heart," said Zamar. "Mr. Solon's main purpose is participation then competition."

Formed only last month, the Marlins are still on the familiarization process. The players have yet to jell and fit into the system of Zamar, also the Philippine team head coach.

"We're the second to the last team to be formed. So we need to expedite everything," said Zamar, who has assembled a motley group of veterans and youngsters.

Tagged as the Marlins' main man is Bong Alvarez, who's expected to lend leadership and experience to the newcomers like 5-foot-8 Egay Echavez, 6-5 Arnel Manalac, 6-4 Bong Salvador, 5-10 Jonjon Reynoso and 6-6 Ricky Natividad, who had a brief stint as a Pasig Pirate last year..

Meanwhile, MBA officials led by Commissioner Ogie Narvasa and business development director Ramon Tuason will grace today's PSA Sports Forum at the Holiday Inn. Team managers and coaches are also expected to attend the forum sponsored by Red Bull, Agfa Color and McDonald's.



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METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

- Death for niece's rapist A20
- Robbers kill gas station owner A20
- Mechanic accuses 2 WPD policemen of extortion A21
- Carpenter stabbed to death for building 'best' houses A21

Berroya's boys relieved

BY DAVE M. VERIDIANO AND MICHAEL LIM UBAC

PNP chief Leandro Mendoza yesterday promised "fair justice" to the families of those slain in the May 17 "encounter" in Quezon City even as he announced that the 11 PNP Intelligence Group men in the operation have been relieved of their posts and are being held in Camp Crame.

Also yesterday, the 11 men implicated in the killings again failed to show up at the National Bureau of Investigation for questioning.

The 11 IG men under Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya are under investigation for the killing of New World Hotel chief steward Fernando Lozada and family friend Marian Uson, 18.

The 11 are now also facing charges of obstruction of justice for failing to answer the subpoena issued by the NBI.

"I just met with the Lozada and Uson families and I promised to give them fair justice," Mendoza said yesterday.

The failure of the men to present themselves to the NBI for questioning meant they were waiving their right to air their side, said lawyer Oscar Embido, chief of the NBI Intelligence and Special Operations Division.

Embido, who is leading the investigation, had been waiting for the IG agents since Friday.

Embido subpoenaed the IG men to establish whether they violated the PNP rules of engagement when they fired at the car of Lozada, 48, killing him and Uson.

Embido, however, said the agency could not immediately

BERROYA'S/ A20

Man flies into rage over pigeons

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

A PIGEON nearly cost a young man his life yesterday morning in Caloocan City.

Alfredo Cardona, 21, of F. Acab Street in Caloocan, is now in critical condition after his neighbor Roland Labrosa, 32, stabbed him repeatedly after accusing him of stealing his pigeon, police said.

Cardona had just gone out of his house at about 7:30 a.m. when Labrosa confronted him about the missing pigeon, said case investigator PO3 Lorenzo Molina.

The confrontation turned into a fistfight until Labrosa pulled a knife on Cardona and repeatedly stabbed him, PO3 Molina said.

The investigator said the knife thrusts were so forceful that the blade broke.

Cardona suffered several wounds mostly in the left side of the body, police said. He was taken to the Caloocan City Hospital and was later transferred to the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center.

Village watchman Emmanuel Sapida arrested Labrosa, who is now detained at the Caloocan police headquarters. He is facing frustrated homicide charges.

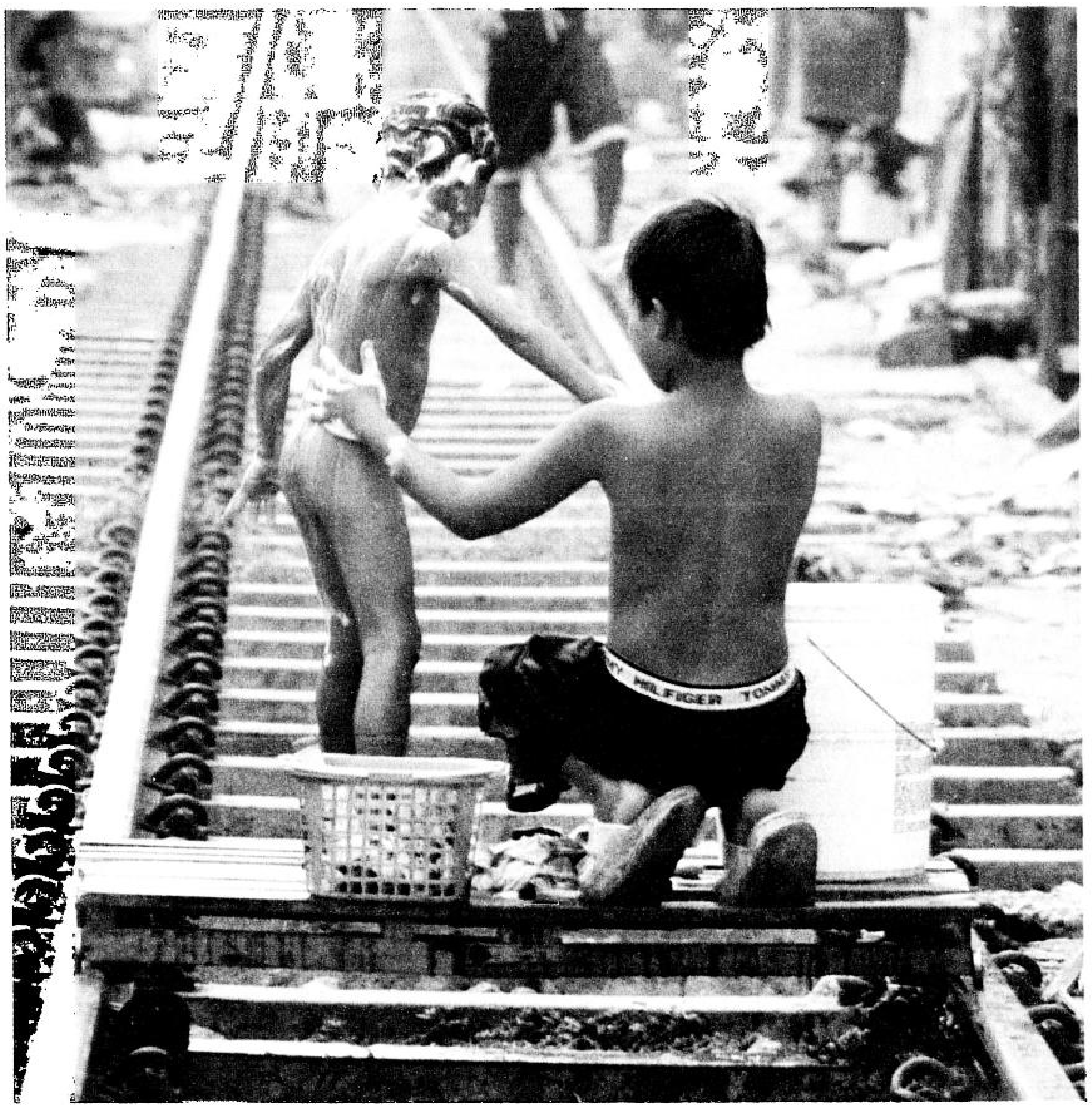
Brawl mars Westlife arrival

BY TJ BURGONIO

THE ARRIVAL of the Irish pop group Westlife yesterday afternoon was marred by a scuffle between their overprotective bodyguards and members of the local media at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Members of the band, which has

BRAWL MARS/ A20



HOME ON THE 'RILES' DENNIS SABANGAN

For many families, the railway running parallel to the Makati portion of the South Luzon Expressway is home, which includes the bathroom even if it happens to be the middle of the tracks. Unlike the popular TV sitcom "Home Along Da Riles" where each day always has a happy ending, life along the Makati tracks is hard, hot and often haunted by hunger.

Team head rescued kidnap victims

BY DAVE M. VERIDIANO

THE TEAM leader of the 10 policemen who "accidentally" killed two civilians in an operation against a group of kidnappers in Quezon City *(Related story on this page)* has had a colorful career marked by successes against kidnapping syndicates.

Supt. Edgar Iglesia, an officer of the Philippine National Police Intelligence Group, led several operations to return kidnapping victims to their families, earning him the praise and gratitude of those he had helped.

But his heroic image was shattered on May 17 when men under his command fired at the blue Mitsubishi Lancer of Fernando Lozada, 48, killing him and a passenger, family friend Marian Uson, 18.

"Not once did my name crop up whenever we undertook successful operations," Iglesia said in Filipino during an interview inside the tightly guarded IG headquarters in Camp Crame. "But in an instant, everything we've worked for is about to be ruined—all because of an incident which no one wanted to happen."

Iglesia's name landed on the pages of several newspapers as the leader of a PNP-IG unit which had arrested members of a notorious kidnapping gang but also killed two civilians and wounded another.

The National Bureau of Investigation is investigating the killings and has summoned Iglesia and his 10 men to shed light on the "mistaken encounter" that led to the death of hotel executive Lozada and Uson.

Investigators from the Central Police District have already filed murder charges against the 11 PNP-IG men.

Iglesia is the same IG officer who led a team of lawmen in the successful rescue of two Filipino-Chinese businesswomen in Bicol two months ago.

It was in this operation that the son of one of the kidnapping victims sent flowers to Iglesia's wife on Valentine's Day.

"I was touched by his devotion to his job," the victim's son had told the Inquirer. "The officer (Iglesia) should have been with his wife on Valentine's Day. To make up for that, I bought a bouquet of roses and sent it to his wife. The officer didn't know that I sent flowers to his wife. He found about it later when he and his wife met."

Iglesia and his men had been monitoring the kidnapping group for more than two weeks in Quezon province. The victim's son said Iglesia and his men were with his family even on Valentine's Day, working on the case.

The NBI had already questioned six members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group who were working with the IG on a case when the May 17 incident occurred.

The CIDG men denied charges that they deliberately killed Lozada and Unson. They claimed they only acted as a backup force to the IG unit.

TEAM HEAD/ A20

GORDON

Gordon pushes hubs-and-spokes tourism pitch

TOURISM Secretary Richard J. Gordon said he would adopt the two-pronged "hubs-and-spokes" concept to promote tourism in the country, now faced with another downtrend in tourist arrival after the latest Abu Sayyaf kidnapping on Sunday.

Speaking before the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati last Tuesday, Gordon said the concept, plus the participation of community-based groups in promoting local tourist destinations, would help boost the government's efforts to attract foreign visitors.

He explained that in the hubs-and-spokes system, tourists would have a jump-off point or the "hub" to reach the "spokes" or tourist sites.

The system would also enable tourists to reach destinations faster and at lesser cost, he said.

Gordon described the hubs as having international airports, efficient land and sea transport, adequate accommodation and

GORDON/ A20

NIEVERA

OCAMPO

Martin sings moving Louie Ocampo song to Metropop victory

A BALLAD that the composer at first meant to be about Christmas, with Filipino lyrics that could bring goose bumps to the listener, is the grand winner of the 2001 Metropop songwriting contest.

That "Pag-uwi" (Homecoming), composed by Louie Ocampo and written by Joey Ayala, was interpreted in Saturday night's finals by singer Martin Nievera further assured the song of victory. Nievera sang the song like it had been written solely for him.

After the show, which was held at the new GMA 7 at the corner of Timog Avenue and Edsa in Quezon City, Nievera told the Inquirer he "will sing it forever."

Ocampo explained in a pre-taped portion of the show that while he initially composed the music of "Pag-uwi" as a Christmas song, it changed because of recent life-changing events in the country.

The song, as worded by Ayala, now talks of the homecoming joy of Filipino expatriates and contract workers: "*Sa pagdating, may luha ma't wala, ako ay sisigaw at hahalik sa lupa.*"

As in previous Metropop finals, most of the interest was focused on the performers, not on the songwriters, when, as show host and composer Ryan Cayabyab pointed out, "this is a songwriting competition."

The grand prize in the country's most prestigious songwriting festival this year included P500,000 in cash and a Ramon Orlina interpretation in glass of the Metropop logo, reportedly costing P60,000.

Second prize winner was "Kawikaan" (Proverb), a upbeat number that rings with ethnic sounds and questions negative Filipino traits, composed by musical scorer La Verne Ducut and with words written by radio copywriter Catherine Carlos who shared P300,000 and an Orlina trophy.

It was performed by Cynthia Alexander, Ayala's sister.

In third place was the only English-language winner, "Heaven-Sent," a jazzy love song by Dennis Garcia, of the popular Hotdog band that pioneered the "Manila Sound" in Philippine music in the '70s. Garcia said he meant it to be a "protest" against the proliferation of ribald, double-entendre songs filling the air waves.

MARTIN SINGS/ A20

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TUESDAY, MAY 29 912-8983

Robbers kill gas station owner

By Blanche S. Rivera and Lady Ann Briguera

THREE robbers yesterday at noon shot dead the owner of a Pasig City gasoline station inside the gas station's convenience store.

But the suspects took a briefcase that contained documents, not money, police said.

Virgilio Bordeos Sr., 51, died inside the Select convenience store, an annex of the Shell gasoline station on Marcos Highway in Barangay Santolan.

Bordeos was shot three times in the head and body when he tried to stop the robbers from fleeing with a bag which they thought contained money but actually had documents.

Insp. Antonio Paulite, case investigator from the Pasig City Police, said three men armed with .38 caliber guns carried out the daring daylight heist.

One of the suspects entered the convenience store at about 12:30 p.m. and inquired about prepaid cell phone cards but did not buy any.

The same man returned a few minutes later with a companion. The two men then announced the holdup while pointing the gun at Bordeos and his sons Mark, 17, and Virgilio Jr., 14.

Paulite said Bordeos, who owned the gasoline station, was manning the store with his children when the robbery took place. There were no employees or security guards on duty yesterday, police said.

The third suspect stayed outside to serve as a lookout.

Police said the two men who entered the store immediately went for the briefcase in Bordeos' office, apparently thinking that the briefcase contained the store's earnings.

Bordeos tried to block the men's exit and tried to grab the bag from one of them, but they stopped him with gunshots.

The three men did not harm the victim's children and immediately fled on board a motorcycle parked outside the convenience store. They sped off toward Antipolo City, Paulite said.

Police could not yet explain why the men did not go for the cash register in the store and the gasoline station, and took the briefcase instead.

Witnesses described the first suspect as 5-foot-3, dark and curly. The second who entered the store was fair and about 5-foot-7. Nobody could recall the features of the lookout.

Police said there were three men who were seen hanging around the gasoline station as early as Sunday. The men also had motorcycles, but it could not yet be confirmed if these were the same men who staged yesterday's heist.

Death for niece's rapist

By Christian V. Esguerra

A CARPENTER yesterday was sentenced to death after he was found guilty of repeatedly raping his 6-year-old niece in Caloocan City in 1997.

Judge Silvestre Bello Jr. also ordered carpenter Nemesio Bon, 42, to pay his victim P125,000 in moral and civil damages.

Court records showed that on Aug. 19, 1997, Bon was caught by the girl's mother--his younger sister—on top of her daughter in a second-floor room of their house in Bagong Barrio, Caloocan.

The girl later told her mother that her uncle had fondled her genitals, records said. Instead of reporting the rape to police, the mother decided to bring her family to Atimonan, Quezon.

After about a month, the victim's family returned to Manila and found out that Bon had been arrested for the rape of another niece.

The victim's parents then accompanied their daughter to the Caloocan Police headquarters to file rape charges against Bon.

Police investigation showed that Bon had been abusing his niece whenever they were left alone in the house.

Police said Bon would offer the girl food or money after each rape to keep her silence.

Medical records also showed a deep cut on the victim's hymen.

But in his testimony, Bon claimed that another relative only influenced the girl's mother to file rape charges against him.

The court, however, did not buy Bon's alibi, considering the victim's "straightforward and truthful" testimony despite her very young age.

Judge Bello added that the victim could not have been influenced by a relative to fabricate a serious charge against her uncle.

Bello handed down the maximum penalty against Bon since the victim was only 6 years old at the time of the rapes.

The case will be sent to a higher court for automatic review, and Bon will be detained at the National Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa.

DENNIS SABANGAN

WAITING FOR LOVE

Inmates at the Quezon City Jail look at the free world from the windows of their cells along Edsa in Kamuning, Quezon City. Many of the detainees wait for visits from relatives, who often never come at all.

Brawl mars . . .

(From page A19)

been making waves for their revival of "Uptown Girl," were mobbed by a bandful of photographers shortly after they flew in from Singapore at 1:10 p.m. on board a Philippine Airlines flight.

Their two burly bodyguards, however, cursed and shoved the photographers who tried to get close and take pictures of the band members while the latter were on their way to the customs area of Naia terminal 2.

Incensed by the rude treatment, some photographers and reporters engaged the bodyguards in a shoving match while the Westlife group was walking toward the exit of the terminal to a waiting van.

An angry member of the media reportedly even kicked one of the bodyguards in the buttocks. Startled, the bodyguards tried to go after the media men but were stopped by customs police.

"We nearly came to blows," one reporter said. "We would have beaten up the bodyguard if the customs police did not stop us."

Unaware of the violent incident, fans waiting outside the terminal shrieked upon seeing the band members being escorted to a van.

The group is scheduled to hold a concert at the Araneta Coliseum tonight.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, May 29, 2001
7th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 20:17-27
Gospel: Jn 17:1-11

Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; give glory to your Son, that the Son may give glory to you. You have given him power over all mortals, and you want him to bring eternal life to all you have entrusted to him. For this is eternal life: to *know* you, the only true God, and the One you sent, Jesus Christ.

I have glorified you on earth and finished the work that you gave me to do. Now, Father, give me in your presence the same Glory I had with you before the world began.

I have made your name known to those you gave me from the world. They were yours and you gave them to me, and they kept your word. And now they *know* that all you have given me comes indeed from you. I have given them the teaching I received from you, and they received it and *know* in truth that I came from you; and they believe that you have sent me.

I pray for them; I do not pray for the world but for those who belong to you and whom you have given to me—indeed all I have is yours and all you have is mine—and now they are my glory. I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world whereas I am going to you. Holy Father, keep them in your Name (that you have given me,) so that they may be one, just as we are."

Commentary:

Finally, the supreme moment has come. Jesus will show that he loves his very own unto the end. That is why, the Fourth Evangelist presents him to be quite concerned for his disciples now that he is about to undertake his passion-death, that will lead to his glorification. He is conscious that they are gifts to him of the Father, to whom all belong. In all his dealings with them, he has revealed that God is, indeed, a Father/Mother to them, to whom they should entrust their lives and labor, as he has himself entrusted his. Now that the Easter season is about to come to an end, have you grown more deeply in your esteem for your being a disciple of the Lord through your baptismal consecration?

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—Rebuttal evidence—Rebuttal evidence is that which given to explain, repel, counteract or disprove facts given in evidence by the adverse party. It is also defined as evidence in denial of some affirmative fact which the adverse party has attempted to prove. Myrna as the mother of the victim and wife of Ricardo was properly called to the witness stand to rebut all damaging insinuations pertaining to the accused's homosexuality. By testifying in rebuttal, Myrna is in effect commenting that the homosexual affair, whether true or imagined, was not the real basis for the filing of the rape charge. Even more apparent is that whatever rebuttal statement could have been evoked from Ricardo would merely be corroborative since Myrna had said and denied in her rebuttal all that was necessary to turn this case in their favor. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Bellosillo, Second Division, People v. Santos, G.R.No. 127846, October 18, 2000]

Digest by R.B. Vera

Martin sings . . .

(From page A19)

It was interpreted by Ella May Saison leading a group called Sayson and Friends.

Third prize meant P200,000 and an Orlina glass trophy.

The Metropop finals show, which was aired in a delayed telecast the same night, also included the conferment of the Antonio C. Barreiro Achievement Awards to the Apo Hiking Society, composed of Danny Javier, Jim Paredes and Buboy Garovillo.

The award, named after the late broadcaster and philanthropist, honors individuals who gave "significant and lasting contributions to the growth and development of Filipino music."

Given to a group for the first time, the award recognized the Apo as "easily the most creative group in Philippine entertainment, both collectively and individually."

Paredes also headed the night's board of judges, which had 19 other members from the music and entertainment industry and the media, including the editor of the Inquirer Metro and Entertainment sections.

In accepting the award, Paredes said in Filipino that the winning compositions should be those written in a language that "could be understood by the greater number of people."

Cayabyab, a previous Antonio C. Barreira Achievement Award winner, co-hosted the smooth, fast-paced show with singer Jaya.

According to this year's Metropop organizers, a total of 1,903 entries were received from all over the country as well as from Filipinos in other parts of the world. The big number had to be reduced to the final 12.

Berroya's boys relieved

(From page A19)

charge Berroya's men with murder even after they failed to answer the subpoena.

Initially, Camp Crame admitted the agency subpoenaed 11 IG agents and more than 10 CIDG agents. But records showed Embido subpoenaed only 10 IG agents.

Aside from team leader Supt. Edgar Iglesia (See related story, Page A19), Senior Insp. Edwin Portencio and Chief Insp. James Mejia, those who failed to appear before the agency for questioning were four police officers 1 and four inspectors.

But the 10 men of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group who acted as backup force to the IG unit during the controversial operation showed up at NBI yesterday.

All the CIDG agents executed statements denying charges they deliberately killed Lozada and Uson on Araneta Avenue in Quezon City on May 17.

The CIDG and IG members claimed they mistook the Lancer for the escape vehicle of kidnappers.

The lawmen at that time were pursuing the suspected kidnappers of Mark Harry Bacalla.

Rep. Apolinario Lozada Jr. of Negros Occidental condemned the killing of Lozada, who was his cousin, and demanded the immediate prosecution of the lawmen involved.

"I condemn this callous killing of innocent civilians by police who are supposed to uphold and protect the very same people from criminal elements," the congressman said.

He said the incident involving his cousin was not the first of its kind, and that the lives of many innocent civilians have been lost in similar incidents. ***With a report from Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau***

MENDOZA

Gordon pushes hub-and-spokes . . .

(From page A19)

communication facilities, as well as professionally trained tourism handlers.

He said giving local governments and community groups more active roles in tourism development complements the hubs-and-spokes system.

Gordon believes the strategy will work because today's tourists want to experience as much local culture and natural attractions within a short distance of the airport.

"Bali (in Indonesia) is very popular because as soon as tourists step out of the airport, there's already much to be enthralled with,'' he said. "We have to make it easy for tourists to move around the Philippine islands."

He said the 1.8 million tourists who arrived here last year represent only 4.7 percent of the travelers who came to Southeast Asia in 2000. This is lower than the Philippine market share of 6.6 percent in 1999 when visitors totaled 2.2 million, Gordon noted.

He said Southeast Asia posted the highest growth rate of 14.6 percent in regional tourism arrivals from 1999 to 2000. The Philippines, however, trailed its Asian neighbors in tourist arrivals.

But Gordon said he believes the country would recover from the current tourist slump by rebuilding its image through advertising and public relations.

Unfortunately, he said, the Department of Tourism has only a US$660,000 budget for advertising and promotions, compared to Thailand's $45 million, and Hong Kong's $60 million, he said.

Gordon also noted that it is essential for the country to "put its house in order" through cleanliness and efficient services.

"The entry of more visitors to the 'spokes' will naturally bring the benefits of tourism to the masses in the countryside," he said. "Where tourism advances, poverty retreats."

The strong involvement of communities would also speed up the development of a national culture of tourism, Gordon said.

Team head rescued kidnap . . .

(From page A19)

Iglesia and his men have yet to report to the NBI to give their side of the incident, but they already submitted to their chief, Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, the details of what happened on May 17 along Araneta Avenue in Quezon City.

According to the report to Berroya, Iglesia's men, together with a team from the CIDG and the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp, were conducting follow-up operations to arrest the kidnappers of Mark Harris Batalla, 24, on Araneta Avenue about 8:30 p.m.

Iglesia reported that he thought Lozada would stop when the hotel executive's car approached the blocking force. But he was surprised when Lozada allegedly stepped on the gas, made a 180-degree turn and drove against the traffic.

Iglesia claimed Lozada went straight to the place where the command vehicle was parked.

Iglesia said when Lozada's vehicle slowed down a little, he tried to flag it down. But the speeding Lancer nearly sideswiped him, he said.

"I fell on the pavement and my men thought I was hit," he said. "That was the time I heard the burst of gunfire."

"Our leader fell to the ground, we thought he was hit so some of us started firing," said an IG agent in Filipino.

"It's hard to control that kind of situation," the agent added. "If he (Lozada) had only stopped as we expected him to, nothing would have happened. But he suddenly accelerated and he went against the flow of traffic . he even hit our boss."

Mechanic accuses 2 WPD policemen of extortion

By Alcuin Papa

A MECHANIC arrested for illegal gambling accused two members of the Western Police District of extortion yesterday.

Ramon Billones, 28, of 173 A. Lavezares Street, Binondo, Manila, filed a complaint yesterday at the WPD's General Assignments Section against SPO4 Ernani Pociano and SPO1 Rodolfo Suba of WPD Station 11 in Binondo.

Billones said as he was on his way home Sunday at about 10 a.m., he spotted some men being chased by two policemen on Valderama Street.

The policemen, who were later identified as Pociano and Suba, came upon Billones and arrested him for allegedly engaging in "*tupada*" or illegal cockfight. Billones was taken to WPD Station 11, according to the complaint.

At Station 11, Billones said, the two policemen tried to extort P30,000 from him for his release.

When he said he didn't have that much money on him, the policemen lowered the amount to P20,000, he said.

Billones said he still did not have that much and offered Pociano and Suba P1,000 which he said they took.

After 45 minutes, Billones was released. He proceeded to the WPD headquarters on UN Avenue and filed the complaint.

But according to case investigator SPO3 Cecilio Sacorun, even if he called on the two suspects to make them explain their actions, nothing would come out of it.

"Usually, they refuse to come to our office to explain their side," Sacorun told the INQUIRER.

The only thing he could do, Sacorun said, is to immediately file a case in court against the suspects for illegal arrest, robbery and extortion based on Billones' complaint.

This is not the first time WPD station 11 policemen were implicated in extortion.

On May 8, a businessman accused seven Station 11 men of extorting P240,000 from him.

The case against the seven had been filed in court.

SHOPPING FOR SUPPLIES
It's that time of year again, the tense weeks before the opening of the new school year, and students and parents look for the best buys in school supplies—meaning the cheapest, which are often found in stalls in Divisoria such as this busy one. ERIK ARAZAS

Carpenter stabbed to death for building 'best' houses

By Alcuin Papa, Allison Lopez and Margarette Deodosio

AN argument over who was the best in building houses led to the killing of a carpenter by his fellow carpenters in Parañaque City on Sunday night.

Police identified the victim as Felix Ranoco, 33, married and a resident of Squatters Area on Camachili Street in Purok Ibayo, Barangay Sun Valley, Parañaque.

Ranoco was declared dead on arrival at the South Super Highway Medical Center. He had several stab wounds in various parts of the body.

According to PO2 Ramil Padios of the Criminal Investigation Division of the Parañaque City Police, the stabbing happened at about 8 p.m. Sunday near Ranoco's house.

The four other carpenters were identified only as Rene, Rey, Doy and Toti. Investigation showed that they visited Ranoco that night and invited him to a drinking session.

While they were drinking, one of the four men began talking about their work. Ranoco bragged that he built the best houses among them.

The four others apparently resented his boasting. They argued until the four men ganged up on Ranoco and stabbed him to death.

Ranoco's wife Julieta brought him to the hospital, but he died before receiving any treatment.

Parañaque police were still looking for the four suspects, who will be charged with homicide.

Taxi passengers rob driver

By Tricia Bona D. Pablo

TWO armed men robbed a taxi driver of his cab and earnings in Quezon City early yesterday.

Primitivo Sarmiento, 35, of No. 86 Santiago St., San Francisco Del Monte, Quezon City, told investigators he was driving his silver Toyota Corolla taxi when he was flagged down by the two men.

PO2 Venirando Trago of Central Police District-Station 10 said the incident happened at 2:45 a.m. at the corner of Scout Gardia and Scout Santiago in Barangay Laging Handa.

Sarmiento said the two men asked to be brought to the Scout area. But just a few minutes later, one of them pulled out a gun and a knife and announced a holdup.

The suspects drove away with the taxi and the driver's P2,300, police said.

Beauty shop has ugly experience

By Christian V. Esguerra

A FACIAL care shop lost at least P200,000 in cash and equipment to armed robbers in Caloocan City on Sunday, according to police.

Unidentified men barged into Facial Plus Inc. at 200 New Grace Building on 10th Avenue at about 8:30 a.m. The company is owned by an Emma Guerrero, police said.

The robbers forced open the shop's steel door and took assorted materials, said case investigator SPO2 Roland Mendoza of the Caloocan Police Station Investigation and Intelligence Bureau.

The shop lost several appliances, medicine and medical equipment, and personal belongings amounting to at least P200,000, police said.

The early morning heist was discovered by employees Edilyn Miranda and Jane Untalan.

Man hangs himself inside motel

By Alcuin Papa

FINANCIAL problems forced a 42-year-old father of two to take his own life inside a motel in Sta. Cruz, Manila early yesterday morning, police said.

The Western Police District Homicide Division identified the victim as Michael Reyes, of 857 Jaime St., Sampaloc, Manila.

According to investigators, Reyes was discovered by staff members of the Richluck Lodging Inn along Rizal Avenue at about 1:15 a.m. hanging from the ceiling of room 7-B.

Reyes used a nylon cord to hang himself, police said.

Motel supervisor Ramir Paculan verified that Reyes checked in at about 2 p.m. Sunday and told the attending staff not to wake him up for whatever reason.

Because Reyes was supposed to check out yesterday morning, motel workers decided to knock on his room. They got no response.

Using a duplicate key, the motel workers opened Reyes' room and found him hanging, police said.

Investigators said they also found among the victim's belongings a receipt for the nylon cord that he used.

They said Reyes left a suicide note to his wife and two children asking them forgiveness. He also asked his wife to cremate his body.

Reyes' wife told investigators that her husband was depressed over his debts.

Theft raps vs UP chief of police

THE CHIEF of UP Police task force was charged with grave misconduct and theft by residents of UP Diliman, Quezon City.

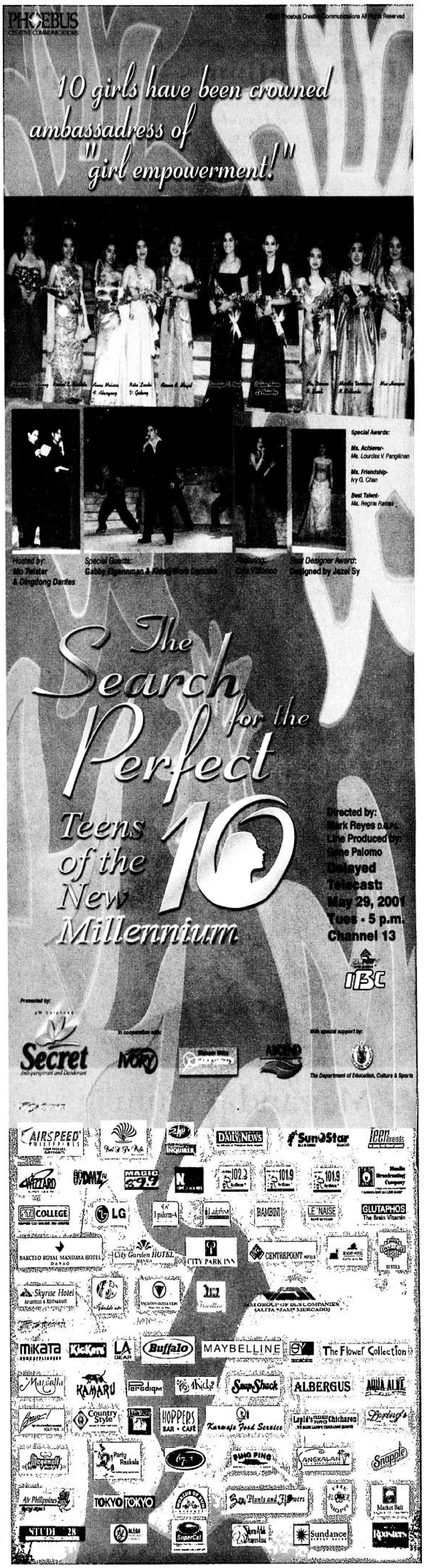
Major Benjie Baltazar, head of UP Police Task Force, purportedly headed the demolition of the garage and fence of complainants Anita Tuquerbo and Lulubelle Gaan, both of Pook Ricarte, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

In a statement, Tuquerbo and Gaan said they obtained a permit for the house repair and the construction of a temporary garage which was inspected by Baltazar. But Baltazar told them the construction was not allowed and had them remove the galvanized iron roof and replace it with a canvas, they said.

"They inspected the repair of our house and the construction of our gate, they did not stop the construction being done in an adjacent lot while they demolished our garage and fence," they said.

But on May 21, 2001 the UP Police Task Force headed by Baltazar accompanied by other policemen brought five workers who demolished their fence and garage and took with them the iron gate and roof sheets.

Ma. Lydia P. Alminana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PNB continues to be top choice of Filipino Overseas Workers

THE PHILIPPINE National Bank posted a significant rise in the volume of remittance transactions totaling US $879 million for the first quarter of year 2001 up by 26 percent from the previous year's figure of US $697 million.

The increase according to PNB President Feliciano L. Miranda, Jr., was mainly due to the strong performance of PNB's remittance center's and correspondent banks in the USA and Canada and the Asia-Pacific regions which were up by 49 percent and 28 percent respectively.

With an extensive network of 78 overseas branches subsidiaries, representative offices, remittance centers and over 718 correspondent banks worldwide, PNB continues to be the top choice among Filipino overseas remitters. This year's addition to PNB's remittance centers are San Francisco (USA) and Vancouver (Canada) branches which opened April of this year and Virginia Beach which started operations this May.

> *High accessibility via its online direct credit remittance faculty called Rapid Remit in which remittance proceeds may be withdrawn by the beneficiary through PNB's ATM facility*

High accessibility via its online direct credit remittance faculty called Rapid Remit in which remittance proceeds may be withdrawn by the beneficiary through PNB's ATM facility. Superteller is still the most commonly used facility of the OFWs. Additionally, PNB also offers services such as its Electronic Remittance Processing System (ERPS) which allows non online remittance of funds from the originating PNB overseas offices and subsidiaries for credit to account PNB's Door to Door Delivery or 3D service similarly caters to customers who require immediate delivery of their remittances in cash or check to their beneficiaries right in their doorsteps.

PNB/ p. A5

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MEGALINK

PNB continues to be top choice of Filipino. . . (from page A4)

Simultaneously, PNB is aggressive in its pursuit to maintain its lead position in the remittance industry through its various promotional schemes like launching the *Premyo Pangkabuhayan 2001*, a quarterly draw for OFWs which caters prizes as PNB is aggressive in its pursuit to maintain its lead position in the remittance industry through its various promotional schemes such as sari-sari store showcases and tricycles for livelihod projects and scholarships, to name a few.

To date, in its recently concluded quarter draws last January 15 and April 16, more than 60 winners have earned livelihood prizes. The final draw is slated on October 12, 2001 with a grand prize of a livelihood showcase worth P150,000 each for 4 lucky winners.

As an additional assistance to Filipino OFWs, PNB had tied up with POEA through the AWARE Foundation, Inc. by sponsoring seminars to pre-departing OFWs aptly called the PDOS Center at the PNB Financial Center. The PDOS Center's module included topics such as Travel Procedures, Agencies for OFW Assistance, Codes of Discipline, Gender Sensitivity and Remittance Procedures and Requirements at PNB. Since it opened last year, more than 20,000 pre-departing OFWs had enrolled at the PDOS Center with up to 80 percent of them maintaining an account with the PNB.

> *PNB is aggressive in its pursuit to maintain its lead position in the remittance industry through its various promotional schemes*

For the OFWs convenience, PNB keeps a tab on inquiries and complaints phoned in by remitters through its 24-hour hotline number at 551-8888.

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5	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
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6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALIKTARAN
7	DOLBY SURROUND	15 MINUTES
8	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
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10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE POSSESSED

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3	DOLBY SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS
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5	DOLBY SURROUND	BALIKTARAN
6	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8	DOLBY SURROUND	VALENTINE
9	DOLBY SURROUND	THE POSSESSED
10	DOLBY SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
11	DOLBY SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
12	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	TRAFFIC
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	KAMASUTRA 2001
3	DOLBY SURROUND	THE POSSESSED
4	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	VALENTINE
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
8	DOLBY SURROUND	BALIKTARAN
9	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
10	DOLBY SURROUND	15 MINUTES
11	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
12	DOLBY SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR 8820950

1	ULTRA SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	DIVINO, ANAK NI TOTOY MOLA

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1	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
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3	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4	DTS	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
9	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
10	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	VALENTINE
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TRAFFIC

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	DOLBY SURROUND	BALIKTARAN
2	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
4	DOLBY SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
5	DOLBY SURROUND	TRAFFIC
6	DOLBY SURROUND	VALENTINE
7	DTS	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE MUMMY RETURNS
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
10	DOLBY SURROUND	THE POSSESSED
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
12	DOLBY SURROUND	15 MINUTES

SM SOUTHMALL 8066969 • 8066782

1	ULTRA SURROUND	15 MINUTES
2	ULTRA SURROUND	THE POSSESSED
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
4	ULTRA SURROUND	TRAFFIC
5	ULTRA SURROUND	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
6	ULTRA SURROUND	BALIKTARAN
7	ULTRA SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
9	ULTRA SURROUND	VALENTINE
10	ULTRA SURROUND	DALAWA SI EBA

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TRAFFIC
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALIKTARAN

SM CEBU 2313876

1	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	ULTRA SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
3	ULTRA SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER
4	ULTRA SURROUND	THE CROW
5	ULTRA SURROUND	THE SEDUCER
6	ULTRA SURROUND	BALIKTARAN
7	DOLBY SURROUND	THWE MUMMY RETURNS

SM ILOILO 3209422

1	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
3	ULTRA SURROUND	ATTACK FORCE
4	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
5	ULTRA SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS
6	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
7	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
8	ULTRA SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER

SM PAMPANGA 7128015

1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	DOLBY SURROUND	VALENTINE
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE POSSESSED
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ORAS NA PARA LUMABAN
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2 THE MUMMY RETURNS	2 TRAFFIC In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	6 THE MUMMY RETURNS In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND	2 THE MUMMY RETURNS In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND	2 THE MUMMY RETURNS In DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 KAMASUTRA 2001	3 THE MUMMY RETURNS THX In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND	7 THE MUMMY RETURNS In DTS DIGITAL SOUND	3 THE MUMMY RETURNS In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND	3 THE MUMMY RETURNS In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 THE MUMMY RETURNS	4 SOMEONE LIKE YOU In DTS DIGITAL SOUND Art Film		4 MARTIN NIEVERA LIVE June 8-9 9PM Onstage	4 SPY KIDS In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
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6 GOLD (SDDS)	TRAFFIC
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2	THE MUMMY RETURN
3	MASARAP UNANG KAGAT

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	SPY KIDS
2	TRAFFIC
3	KAMASUTRA 2001
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
5	PILAK

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	BALIKTARAN
2	KAMASUTRA 2001
3	TRAFFIC
4	RESERVE
5	MASARAP UNANG KAGAT
6	THE MUMMY RETURN
7	RESERVE
8	DALAWA SI EBA

LOUIE'S CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010/892.3349

1	THE MUMMY RTURNS

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	ANTI TRUST
2	HALIK NG SERENA

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515

1	RESERVE
2	DALAWA SI EBA
3	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	MASARAP UNANG KAGAT
A	DALAWA SI EBA

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	PILAK
3	MASARAP UNANG KAGAT
4	DALAWA SI EBA

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
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1 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
5	KAMASUTRA 2001
6	SPY KIDS
7 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8 (SDDS)	VALENTINE
9 (DOLBY)	TRAFFIC

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	PILAK
2	BALIKTARAN
3	THE MUMMY RETURNS
4 (SDDS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
5	SPY KIDS
6 (DOLBY)	TRAFFIC
7 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	KAMASUTRA 2001
3	RESERVE
4	SPY KIDS
5 (SDDS)	CLOSED
6	BALIKTARAN
7 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8	TRAFFIC

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	TRAFFIC
3 (DTS)	RESERVE
4	SPY KIDS
5 (SDDS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

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Lords	WINASAK
Jennet	PILAK

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	TRAFFIC
2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	RESERVE
4	SPY KIDS

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

1	
3	THE MUMMY RFTURNS

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	TRAFFIC
3	MASARAP UNANG KAGAT
4	ORAS NA PARA LUMABAN
5	DALAWA SI EBA

New Divisoria Mall
CINEMA tel 244.4619

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	TRAFFIC
3	PILAK
4	ORAS NA PARA LUMABAN
5	DALAWA SI EBA
6	MASARAP UNANG KAGAT

Baclaran LRT
CINEMA tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	SPY KIDS
3	DALAWA SI EBA
4	
5	

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Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
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1	PILAK
2	15 MINUTES
3 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	15 MINUTES
2 (DTS)	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
3 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
4	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	TRAFFIC
2	DALAWA SI EBA
3	MASARAP UNANG KAGAT
4 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
3 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
4	PILAK
5	15 MINUTES

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	15 MINUTES
3	THE POSSESSED

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	15 MINUTES
3	THE POSSESSED

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	BALIKTARAN
2	EXIT WOUNDS
3	KUNG LILIGAYA KA

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1	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	PILAK

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2 [illegible]	RESERVE

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1	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	DIVINO, ANAK NI TOTOY MOLA
2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	SPY KIDS

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	PILAK
2	15 MINUTES
3	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
4	BALIKTARAN

Berma
tel 879.2168

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	DALAWA SI EBA

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

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3	RESERVE
4	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	SPY KIDS
2	THE POSSESSED
3	VALENTINE
4 (DTS EX)	THE MUMMY RETURNS

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Baldwin, Berenger star in movie about skydiving

TECHINICALLY, the term "cutaway" is when a skydiver has a problem with his main chute so he pulls another handle to release his reserve chute.

Symbolically, in the film "Cutaway," produced by Cutting Edge Entertainment and distributed locally by Giant Pictures, it refers to a philosophy commonly held by skydivers, where they believe that you must eliminate all the different aspects of your life that will obstruct you mentally and emotionally from being able to focus on skydiving.

"Cutaway" delves into the world of skydiving with an intensity only achieved by experts. Directed by Guy Manos Dom a screenplay he wrote with brother Greg Manos, the movie tells the story of a US customs agent Vic Cooper (Stephen Baldwin) who goes deep under cover into the world of skydiving, where he meets fanatical drug smugglers Red Line (Tom Berenger) and Turbo (Dennis Rodman), who use their parachuting skills to bring illegal shipments into Miami.

Cooper is quickly seduced by the intoxicating rush of the skydiving world, as well as the allure of love with the sole female skydiver Starr (Maxine Bahns). Before long, the death-defying sport seduces Vic's competitive nature and the lines between his mission and his passion are blurred.

Manos, who is an experienced skydiver in real life, aims and succeeds in bringing to the screen the thrill of the sport, it could make a person cut away all ties to his life and devote his energy to skydiving.

"Cutaway" starts its regular theater run May 30.

The movie is a must-see for lovers of non-stop action and adventure like all the stars in the cast, including Hollywood action stars Ron Silver and Casper Van Dien, who performed their own skydiving stunts.

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3. BALIKTARAN
4. EXIT WOUNDS
5. THE MUMMY RETURNS
6. SWEET NOVEMBER

DOLBY dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	KAMASUTRA 2001
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	TRAFFIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	SPY KIDS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	VALENTINE
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	TRAFFIC
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	MALIKOT ANG AGOS NG TUBIG / TALK DIRTY
ODEON	MUMMY RETURNS
ODEON-2	KAMASUTRA 2001
ROBEN	DALAWA SA PARAISO NI EVA
TANDEM-1	KUNG LILIGAYA KA
TANDEM-2	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
TIMES	SNATCH / BAIT
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	TRAFFIC
QUEZON-1	MUMMY RETURNS
REMAR	MUMMY RETURNS
REMAR-2	DALAWA SA PARAISO NI EVA
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED
CINEMA-2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	TRAFFIC
CINEMA-2	BALIKTARAN
CINEMA-3	15 MINUTES
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	EXIT WOUNDS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-6	THE POSSESSED
CINEMA-7	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
CINEMA-8	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	TRAFFIC
CINEMA-12	SPY KIDS
CINEMA-14	VALENTINE
CINEMA-15	KAMASUTRA 2001
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SPY KIDS
CINEMA-2	TRAFFIC
CINEMA-3	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-4	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-5	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-6	THE MUMMY RETURNS

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11:00 PM - Mummy Returns

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Romero film classic on Cinema One

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

LAST Wednesday, we tuned in to Cinema One, the new movie channel that has replaced the Pinoy Blockbuster Channel. We hear that Cinema One will do more than just show Filipino films and will cover the entertainment scene by way of programs like "Cinema Talk," "Cover Story" and "Behind the Headlines."

Last Wednesday, the big feature on Cinema One was **Eddie Romero**'s "Ganito Kami Noon, Paano Kayo Ngayon?" which was given a special screening because the production was marking its 25th anniversary.

We were happy to see that Romero's film was still eminently viewable 25 years after it was first screened, unlike many other movies that end up looking tired and dated after only a few years.

Romero's features Christopher de Leon at his best as the naïve Kulas, who arrives in Manila in time for the Philippine Revolution. Outstanding performances are also turned in by **Leopoldo Salcedo** and **Gloria Diaz**.

Viewing this film for the nth time convinces us anew that Eddie Romero fully deserves to be named National Artist for Film.

On Star Movies

THIS MONTH, Star Movies presents these particularly viewable films:

"10 Things I Hate About You" with **Heath Ledger** and **Julia Stiles**, at 9 p.m. on Monday, June 4. (Replays on Monday, June 11 at 12:45 a.m. and 3:15 p.m.)

"Anna and the King" with **Jodie Foster** as the schoolteacher who instructs the children of the Siamese monarch, played by **Chow Yun-Fat**. The movie will be screened at 9 p.m. on Saturday, June 16, with replay on Friday, June 29 at 11 p.m.

"Mystery, Alaska," a drama about a small town rising to meet a very big challenge, will be shown at 9 p.m. on Sunday, June 17. It stars **Russell Crowe**, **Hank Azaria** and **Burt Reynolds**.

"Mumford" will be telecast on Monday, June 18 at 9 p.m. **Ted Danson** stars as a psychologist who comes to a small town and begins dispensing no-nonsense advice to the quirky locals. (Replays are on Monday, June 25 at 12:45 a.m. and 3:45 p.m.).

"Anywhere But Here" is about a journey of mutual discovery for a mother (**Susan Sarandon**) and daughter (**Natalie Portman**). Telecast on Sunday, June 24 at 9 p.m., with replay on Saturday, June 30 at 12 p.m.

'Smooth Jazz Classics'

CITY Lite 88.3 has launched its "Smooth Jazz Classics Collection" CD. The cuts include "The Key to You by **David Benoit** featuring **David Pack** from the album "Every Step of the Way;" "In My Life" by **Patti Austin**; "On and On" by **Stephen Bishop**; "Let's Stay Together" by The Rippingtons; "I Need Your Love" by Seawind; "Keep This Love Alive" by **Tom Scott**; "Smiles and Miles to Go" by **Larry Carlton**; "Eenie Meenie" by **Jeffrey Orborne**, "Louisiana Sunday Afternoon" by **Diane Schurr**, and "Friends and Strangers" by **Dave Grusin**.

The collection is available in CDs and cassettes at Tower Records and Music One outlets.

Feedback

FROM **EDNEL A. Almoradie** of Cavite City;

"Here are some new stories for old movie titles:

"'Joe vs. the Volcano:' Watch Joe trek up Mayon Volcano and try to stop its eruption.

"'Last Action Hero:' A guy named Gringo and his pure military idealism.

"'Scary Movie:' A comedy thriller about an ex-president who never surrenders—even after he's dead!

"'Charlie's Angels:' The Sex Bomb Dancers are called to duty by their flirtatious leader, Bossing, to fight criminals with their dancing prowess."

TV treats

MONDAY, June 4 at 11 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, join a joint Russian-American team as it tries to save "Russia's Amur Tigers."

At 10 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, **Hugo Delgado** mounts a scientific expedition up Mt. Popocatepetl in "Volcano."

Popocatepetl is located less than 50 miles away from Mexico City.

'The Practice'

ON JUNE 13, "The Practice" enters its fourth season on Star World (its telecast every Wednesday at 10 p.m.). The drama about lawyers has won six Emmy awards, including two for best drama; three Golden Globes and a Peabody award.

David E. Kelley's acclaimed drama series stars **Dylan McDermott** and shows how a group of defense lawyers serves a disenfranchised part of society.

In the June 13 telecast, Bobby represents a dentist accused of murdering one of his patients, while Ellenor goes out to dinner with **George Vogelman**.

'Extreme Science'

LEARN more about the behavior of exotic animals in "Extreme Science" on the National Geographic Channel every Wednesday of June at 10 p.m. It shows how "extreme scientists go beyond the usual boundaries to save lives and help us understand the world we live in.

Tintin and Julius to wed in 2003

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

I IMMENSELY enjoyed being a guest in "Talk TV." Between takes, I asked **Julius Babao** if **Tin-Tin Bersola** and he enjoy hosting the show more than they did "Alas Singko Y Medya." "Yup!" says Julius. "We have both outgrown Alas Singko Y Medya although we miss it, too. 'Talk TV' is a whole new ballgame for us. In 'ASYM' we usually just read the teleprompter but now it's more exciting because we interact more. Anything goes. 'Talk TV' has no rigid format. We can be serious one minute then wacky in an instant."

After the show, I cornered Julius and Tin-Tin and asked them if they were going to get hitched soon since. They have been a couple for quite sometime now. You know how it is in most love relationships. You get to a point when you're in too deep so you might as well take the plunge. Sort of a crossroad where you have to decide whether to walk down the aisle or head for the exit route.

"We plan to get married in 2003 but right now we already have the list of godparents and I want **Renee Salud** to make my gown," Tin-Tin beams.

Julius adds, "I'm saving to build a house for us. *Dapat may bahay na bago kami ikasal.*"

There's an unwritten rule in most offices that coworkers should not get romantically entangled. But then again, love makes you break (or maybe just bend) all the rules. Since Julius and Tin-Tin have been a tandem on-cam for the longest time, doesn't their off-cam romance get in the way of their work sometimes?

"We're way past that stage," Julius grins. "When we were just starting, *minsan kung may konting tampuhan kami, medyo* affected *ang* rapport *namin* on-screen but now we hardly even fight. Our personal relationship enhances our professional relationship and vice-versa."

At the (heart)rate they're going, it definitely looks like that not only do they have the best of both worlds, they are also at the center of each other's world.

Rising Ryan

GOT to chat with the current "Crush ng Bayan" **Ryan Agoncillo** (who also cohosts "Talk TV"). He kinda reminds me of **Michael J. Fox**. They don't look alike but Ryan has the boyish charm and cool moves of the former "Spin City" star. So I thought of asking him if he has any plans to join the movies and maybe play Michael J. Fox-ish roles.

He flashes his disarming smile and says, "I'd rather stick to hosting. I wanna be different. It seems that every host ends up doing a movie, while most actors also host TV shows. If I screw up in a film, that might ruin my career as a host so I think it's better if I really concentrate on my hosting and excel. The closest thing I'd get to doing a movie would be commercial modeling."

I countered, "You're right. Why spread yourself too thinly? See what happened to actors-turned-politicians?

Ha ha!"

Some guys who are not even half as gorgeous as Ryan play the field so it was quite a surprise to find out that Ryan is a one-woman man. In the biz, the attempt to tempt and be tempted into a temporary relationship is so strong. But Ryan would rather stay than stray. "I'm faithful to my girlfriend of two years. I like the fact that she's not from show biz so she keeps me in touch with the real world."

Sorry girls, reality bites. End of fantasy.

Bits and pieces

- After winning the best new actress award for "Tanging Yaman," **Janet Mcbride** refuses to let all the success get into her pretty head. She quips, "I have to work even harder to prove that I really deserve the award. Just because I won once, it's no reason that I should be so full of myself *na*. Right now, I think they are planning to make a solo movie for me though I'd rather not say who my dream leading man is."

I'm sure legions of guys out there would volunteer. Take a number and line up, dudes!

- My favorite newscaster **Connie Sison** heaved a sigh of relief that the elections are over and done with. "Like most newscasters, the elections was really quite draining," she says. But of course, it's fulfilling to cover a major event. I forgot how to sleep and eat properly during the campaign and election period. There were times I had a hard time reading the figures *sa sobrang pagod!* I had to make sure I didn't mix up the number of votes or else I'll get into trouble. Ha Ha!"

Looking at her who's so fresh always, you would find it hard to believe that she ever gets stressed out. Oh well, some girls are just born beautiful. In Connie's case, beauty is not just on the outside.

For feedback, e-mail *wateringhole2000@yahoo.com*

2 more nights with Stella

AUDIENCES waited for 30 minutes for the first leg of "The Stella Thing Series" in the Downtown Bar of Hotel Rembrandt on May 10 but, as the saying goes, the show was worth the wait.

"The Stella Thing Series" is the first production venture of Star Magic Productions International. The show that features Stella Ruiz is conceptualized and directed by Che Calica.

The repertoire consists of pop, alternative, Latin and dance.

Alma Concepcion was Stella's special guest in the Downtown Bar show. In the Limits Disco show on May 17, KC Montero and Stella rocked the house with their duet.

In the Hard Rock Café show on May 22, Paco Arespacochaga joined Stella and wowed the crowd with his version of "Leaving on a Jet Plane" and his very own "Line to Heaven."

You can still catch "The Stella Thing Series" at Grilla with Wency Cornejo tonight, and at Ratsky's with KC Montero on Thursday.

Red Bull Energy Drink presents "The Stella Thing Series" with the support of Cafe Provencal, Premiere City Club, Planet Fitness, Celebrity Sports Plaza, and ADT Gen Link. Official radio stations are NU 107, 100.3 The Hive, and LA 105.9.

For inquiries and ticket reservations, call Star Magic Productions International at 890-3245 and look for Miles Brizuela.

Irish band arrives for Araneta Coliseum concert tonight

THE HOT Irish band Westlife is scheduled to arrive today from Singapore for a one-night live concert at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, Quezon City tonight starting at 8 p.m.

Called "Westlife Live in Manila," the concert will also feature as support acts German pop sensation Christian Wunderlich and local singer Anna Fegi.

The show is the fifth leg of the Irish pop sensation's 13-day, seven-nation Asian swing dubbed as "Coast to Coast 2001 Asian Tour," which is meant to promote the band's latest and second album of the same title.

The Asian tour, which started May 22 in Bangkok, also covers Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Seoul and Hong Kong until June 3 before it returns to Japan.

The major musical event will feature Westlife backed by a live band as it performs its biggest hits, including "Swear It Again," "If I Let You Go," "Flying Without Wings," "Seasons in the Sun," "Fool Again" and "I Lay My Love on You."

Tickets are still available at SM Ticketnet outlets at SM department stores and the Araneta Coliseum. Call 911-5555 for reservation and inquiries.

"Westlife Live in Manila'" is sponsored by Nestle La Cremeria, Totally Cool Skechers Sport, No Fear USA and Young Star in cooperation with BMG Records and with the support of REV Asia and Manila Galleria Suites.

It is also backed by radio stations dwKC 93.9, dwTM 89.9, Yes FM 101.1, Star FM 102.7, dwRX 93.1, and Kool 106.

Anna Fegi sings with Westlife

BMG Records (Pilipinas) Inc.'s latest pride Anna Fegi will be one of the support acts for the Westlife "Coast to Coast" Asian Tour 2001 concert at Araneta Coliseum, 8 tonight.

She will join German heartthrob Christian Wunderlich onstage (the other support act for the concert) for the romantic tune "Two Hearts Can Beat as One." The song is one of the cuts from Christian's self-titled debut album (now available in local record stores) and is also featured in Anna's debut album, "Every Step of the Way," to be released soon.

Only 22 years old, Anna has had a wealth of experience as a singer. She started her career with the internationally acclaimed pop group Smokey Mountain under the tutelage of music maestro Ryan Cayabyab. She participated in the rock musical "Hair," which toured in Japan and had a three-month stint with a band in the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Malaysia.

Freestyle heats up Music Museum

FREESTYLE Band

FREESTYLE will turn up the heat when it delivers another sure-fire performance in "Freestyle on Fire," June 15 and 16 at Music Museum. Special guest is Bituin Escalante.

You've heard the music of Freestyle, but do you really know that band?

The name Freestyle was coined by lead guitarist Richard "Tats" Suzara. Hard-pressed to come up with a name for their first gig way back in Davao, Tat, who is also a recording engineer, took out a music magazine and came across the name, thinking that it could serve as a nifty, albeit temporary tag.

But gig after gig, the name stuck and has since become an appropriate tag for the powerhouse groove collective.

Tickets to "Freestyle on Fire" are available at Wilbros Productions Office (372-6038 to 39), National Bookstore outlets, Tower Records or Ticket World outlets (891-5610).

Major sponsors include Vortex by Caltex, Don Henrico's, Astring-O-Sol Ice, Premiere City Club, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Close-Up, Betadine Feminine Wash, Pagcor and Summit Mineral Water.

Radio sponsors are City Lite 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9, 93.9 dwKC, Mellow Touch 94.7, 99.5 RT, 100.3 The Hive, 105.1 Crossover and 103.5 K-Lite.

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SPY KIDS - G 12:20, 2:10, 4:00, 5:55, 7:50, 9:45	TRAFFIC - P 13 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00	MUMMY RETURNS - P 13 1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:50
MUMMY RETURNS - P 13 11:30, 2:10, 4:50, 7:30, 10:10	MUMMY RETURNS - P 13 12:10, 2:50, 5:30, 8:10	MUMMY RETURNS - P 13 12:50, 3:30, 6:10, 8:50

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PHILIPPINE PREMIERE
MATT DAMON
HENRY THOMAS PENELOPE CRUZ
ALL THE PRETTY HORSES
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WINNER
Best Screnplay - Ted Tally
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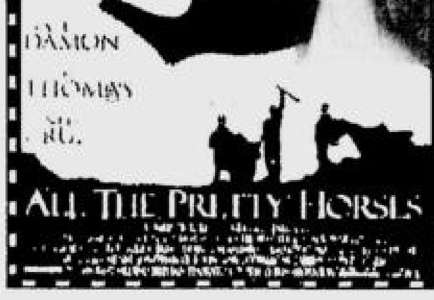

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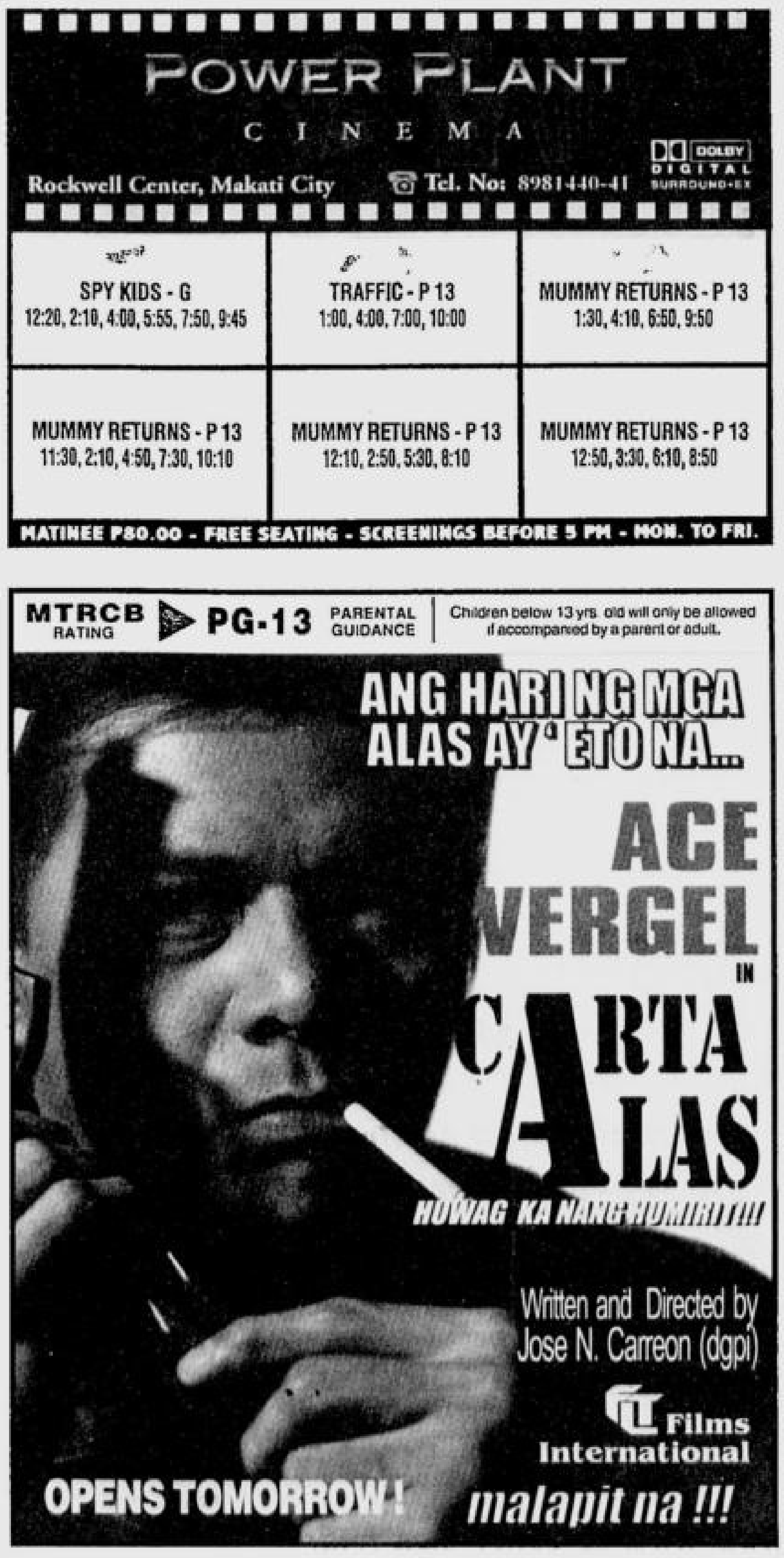

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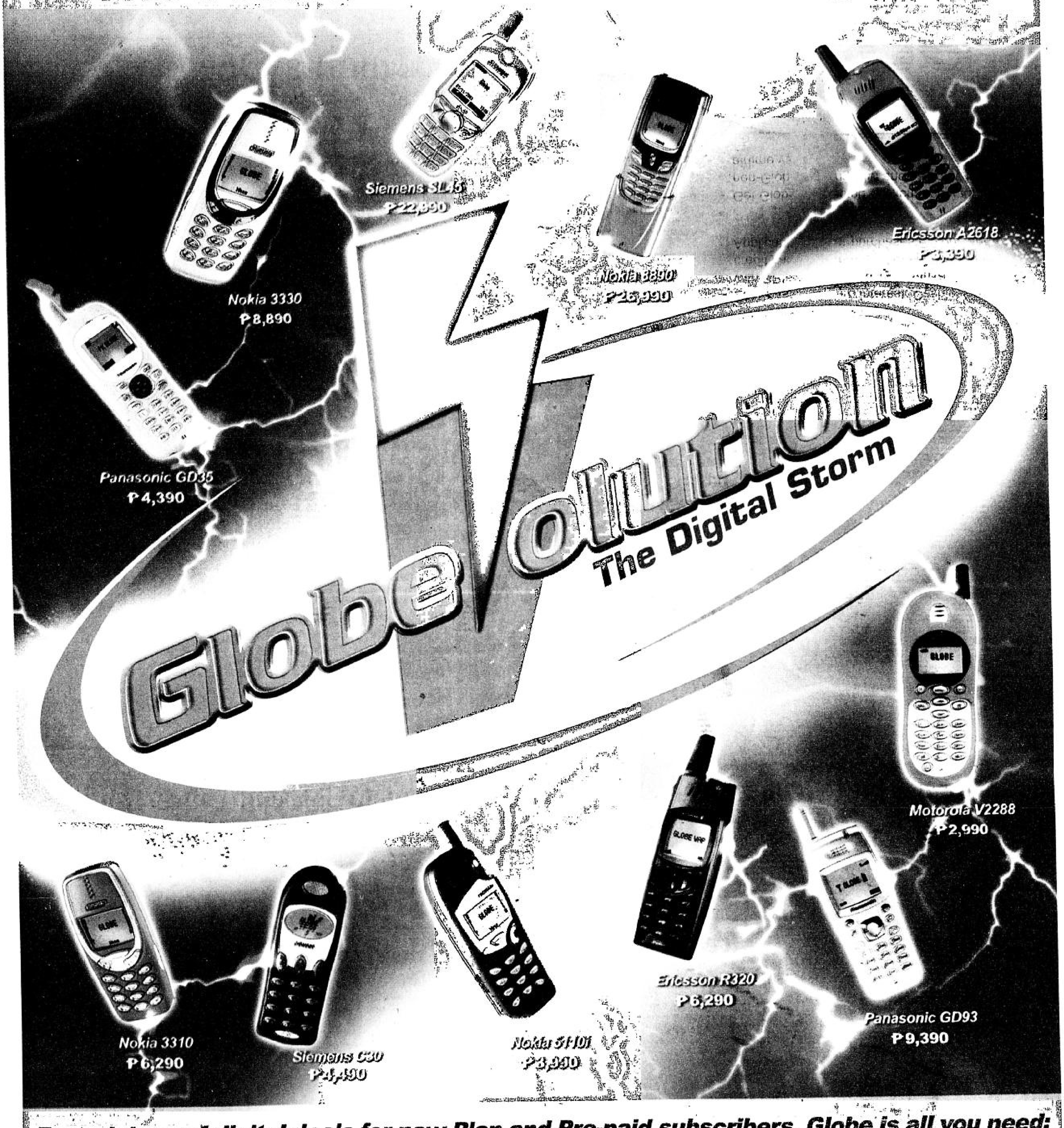
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Banks still vulnerable to shocks–S&P

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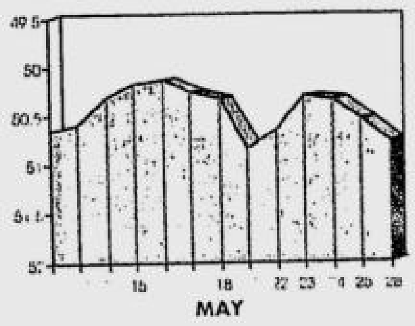


GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

Peso-Dollar Rate

P 50.77 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 25, 2001

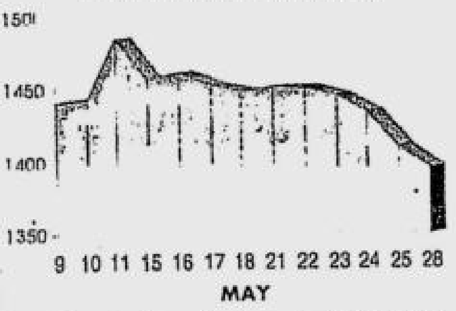
¥ 121.10 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 121.10 as of 5 p.m., May 25, 2001

GOLD:$277.50/278.50
per ounce Hong Kong, May 25, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Shares end lower

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCKS closed lower yesterday with the main index falling below 1,400 points, as another kidnapping by suspected Muslim rebels sent jitters through the market, traders said.

They added nerves over the outcome of the special Congress session to debate the power reform bill, and some continued portfolio re-weighting of stocks affected by changes to the MSCI indices also pressured prices.

Sentiment had previously been battered by the attack on the presidential palace on May 1 and last week's downgrade of the Philippines in the MSCI indices.

The main index closed down 15.11 points, or 1.07 percent, at 1,395.12.

Turnover was a light P411.92 million, down from P1.06 billion last Friday.

Reuters

By ELENA R. TORRIJOS

INTERNATIONAL credit rating agency Standard & Poor's has warned that the Philippine banking system remained "under pressure" and "vulnerable" to various risks as recent political and economic events have aggravated the sector's systemic problems.

Jason Hill, S&P associated director for financial services ratings, said in a statement that foreign investor interest in Philippine banks was weak due to lack of transparency, and the various economic and industry risk concerns.

Hill said the much-need capital infusion into individual financial institutions was being hindered by the desire of existing large shareholders not to weaken their holdings.

"These, coupled with sluggish loan demand and poor profitability, which dates back to the 1997 Asian economic crisis, leave the system increasingly vulnerable to credit, market and operational risk issues," Hill noted.

The S&P analyst observed that the local banking sector was still burdened by the high level of restructured assets and real and other properties owned and acquired.

S&P included Ropoa in its non-performing asset ratios because "realizing the full value of these assets in a timely manner has been difficult in a banking system that is under stress."

The credit rating agency also said that the fragile investor and stakeholder confidence in view of the recent political instability resulted in a heightened deposit mobility from which the banking sector has yet to recover fully.

"Profitability after loan loss provisioning of many of the banks remains anemic. Non-performing assets of these institutions continue to increase. The timely resolution of these issues is very important," Hill said in the statement.

With a dearth of creditworthy borrowers, the banking sector is finding loan growth and improved profitability difficult to achieve.

The management's time and resources have been diverted to managing the banks' non-performing assets at a time when addressing operational efficiency was most important, Hill noted.

Gov't to regain control in PNB revamp

THE GOVERNMENT expects to get its four nominees on the board of the ailing Philippine National Bank and install Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. president Norberto Nazareno as the bank's chair, to replace former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, in today's stockholders meeting.

The government is poised to regain control of the beleaguered bank after PNB's major shareholders agreed last Friday to reelect former Far East Bank and Trust Co. chief operating officer Vicente Panlilio to the board and nominate former Finance Undersecretary Flor Tarriela as director.

The fourth government nominee to the PNB board is Francisco Dizon, former president of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.

The group of taipan Lucio Tan, majority owner of the bank, had no choice but to agree to the government's terms considering the combined P25 billion in outstanding liquidity assistance extended by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and PDIC to the bank. The emergency loan was extended when PNB experienced heavy bank withdrawals in October at the start of the political crisis that ousted former President Joseph Estrada.

Tan, who reportedly controls a 64.85-percent stake in PNB, was expected to be nominated to the board along with Domingo Chua, Macario Te, Enrique Filamor and PNB president Feliciano Miranda Jr.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's sister Cielo Macapagal Salgado and SGV & Co. chair emeritus Washington Sycip will likely be retained in the PNB board to represent the remaining private shareholders' interest as independent directors.

PNB shareholders are expected to grill bank executives about the bank's rising bad loans. The meeting, to be held at 8 a.m. today at the Century Park Hotel, was deemed crucial in the government's bid to regain control of the bank from the Tan group.

The government has estimated that it would have to convert into equity at least P5 billion of its P25 billion financial assistance to PNB to regain a 51-percent stake in the country's fifth largest lender.

Nazareno said that Tan was open to the planned "reverse privatization" of the bank although the plan has yet to be firmed up.

"Everybody is open to a debt-to-equity conversion, the question is how much is to be converted. And our own estimate is that it will be at least P5 billion. However, everything still depends on, after looking into the financial position (of PNB), how we'll move ahead to strengthen the bank," Nazareno said.

Regarding the remainder of the P25-billion assistance, after the debt-to-equity conversion, Nazareno said the government was still considering a dacion en pago arrangement which may involve the bad debts of government agencies to PNB.

"We will try to firm up the final form of the rehabilitation plan as soon as we can," he said.

The BSP and PDIC granted P15 billion and P10 billion in financial assistance, respectively, to PNB last year to boost the bank's coffers amid heavy withdrawals and a hefty bad loan portfolio.

Miranda said the government would use the audit findings of US-based PricewaterhouseCoopers as its basis in determining the debt-to-equity conversion ratio.

The PwC audit revealed that PNB had bigger financial problems than originally thought. Half of the bank's loans, it said, were considered non-performing and the bank's book value deteriorated to P40 a share.

SGV earlier reported that 40 percent of PNB's portfolio last year consisted of bad loans and that its book value stood at P50 a share.

Finance Undersecretary Cornelio Gison said the government would request for a reduction in PNB's par value of P60 to reflect SGV's and PwC's audit findings.

Miranda, however, pointed out that PwC's audit report has yet to be finalized and that the bank was contesting some of the auditor's findings.

Elena Torrijos

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Ominous power bill

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

IT'S time now to look at the positive side of Abu Sayyaf terrorism. At least our lawmakers are avoiding their usual hangout, some first-class resorts where they bask in the sun, probably naked. Ugh! They are also not spending a lot of our tax money.

Moreover, our dearly beloved lawmakers can spare some time for this cute administration of Gloriaetta. With only about a month to live, this Congress got a pressing task from Malacañang. It must pass the power reform bill.

The Palace promises the bill to make our lives less miserable than those of the Abu Sayyaf victims, who were abducted because the bandits already squandered the ransom money—dollars!—they were paid last year for a similar disjointed venture.

And that's really the problem in compromising with terrorists. It's like giving them incentives. Unlike Gloriaetta, who asks Congress for the bill in four days, without anything in return, honest. This Congress did nothing much in its three years, anyway.

* * *

THE BILL is known officially as the "Electric Power Industry Restructuring Act." Whenever you see that word "restructuring," you can bet there's going to be trouble. Based on our recent past, "restructuring" means that some foreigners wanted it done.

That's why the bill is also sometimes called the Omnibus Power Bill, which some people are still able to mispronounce as the "ominous" power bill. It already inspires some deep analyses by so-called political observers. You know, that kind of trouble.

We are told that the bill should cut our monthly electricity bills. Low cost of electricity can also bring about more factories which can hire more workers. As it is, ours are the second highest electricity rates in Asia, next only to those in Japan.

But in that country, people don't care about the high cost of electricity. They are already so rich, they can still afford to use expensive electricity for every conceivable human activity, such as shaving nose hair.

* * *

ANYWAY, some people disagree with this cute administration. They do not buy the swell idea to rush the bill. Maybe somebody forgot to tell them that we have been quarreling over this very same bill for only the past six years now.

From my end, I don't really see major differences to warrant something up to Edsa Quarenta y Quatro. Everybody wants reforms. It's clear something is wrong, when our power rates are this high.

It's also clear to everybody that the state monopoly Napocor is one of the main problems. Obviously, privatization is the answer, which can then create competition in the sector to lower the rates. Now this, it seems to me, is where the main objection arises.

How certain is this cute administration that when only foreign groups control our power industry, they are not going to set the rates among themselves, which are of course high, despite the watchful eyes of our regulatory officials who are expected to be corrupt?

* * *

AND that's the whole problem. It is a problem of trust. There's not much of it given by a lot of people to our government, no matter who happens to be the leader, whether cute or crude. Suspicion still runs high among several groups.

As far as I can put together the points against the bill, this is the main thing. All right, the "ominous" power bill says good things should happen, but they may not actually happen, precisely because of the likelihood of corruption in this country.

If that is the worry, it also applies on the present set-up. When did the government ever succeed in a business, even one that's not as big as a power monopoly? Look, it does not even make money in something as easy as collecting taxes, by golly!

Still, nobody can blame some groups for opposing passage of the bill in this manner. You know, railroaded? We heard a lot of horror stories in the past about railroaded deals. All right, I'll be specific—Petron!

* * *

NOW this cute administration says that it can solve a big issue in the bill. And that is, who should pay for the debts of Napocor which cannot be covered by the proceeds from the sale of its assets? It amounts to something like P100 billion, if we're lucky.

Whether it is paid out of taxes, or it is passed on to us, the users of electricity in this country, we still get it in the behind, period. Whatever the solution is, in other words, all of us can only end up paying for the Napocor debts.

Not really, says Gloriaetta, who in a recent press conference revealed that Energy Secretary Jose Isidro "the Whiz Kid" Camacho already thought of the alternatives. One of them is, well, the government can use its royalty from the Malampaya gas fields.

That's the natural gas project near Palawan which is owned by Shell, Texaco, and of course the one and only Napocor. The government is supposed to get a share from its earnings. Gloriaetta said it could be used for the Napocor debts. Not so fast, ma'am.

* * *

PROBABLY unknown to Gloriaetta, somebody in another administration already sold us down the river in the Malampaya project. How is that? Well, thanks to him, the government no longer enjoys first crack at its own share in the earnings.

The first crack belongs to—who else—the foreign "strategic partners" in the project. Some secret agents told me that this was done through an administrative order, which was even opposed by the Department of Finance.

To think, such an arrangement was not even in the original contract between the "strategic partners" and our dearly beloved government. It was an afterthought! You know, something that was done when no one was looking.

No wonder, some groups remain suspicious in any swell idea which the government tries to sell to us, particularly if it involves deals worth hundreds of billions of pesos, such as Napocor power plants.

Well, frankly, the wolves are already at our door. Some of them already invited some of our beloved public officials to some fact-finding trips abroad which are otherwise known as junkets. That kind of suspicious!

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2 ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"		2,000,000
3 BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	820,000	
4 CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	150 000	100 000
5. CAMP JOHN HAY	400 000	350 000
6. CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	950,000	850 000
7. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		130 000
8. CELEBRITY CLUB	210.000	200 000
9 COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	490 000	450 000
10 CLUB FILIPINO	330 000	300 000
11. EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	250 000	220 000
12. EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	450.000	400 000
13 EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"		100 000
14. FAIRWAYS & BLUEWATER	Pls Call	Pls Call
15. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	300 000	
16. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	550 000	
17 FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600 000	
18. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	400 000	
19 MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	450.000	
20 MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND)	15,500 000	
21 MANILA POLO CLUB	4,000 000	3,500,000
22 MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	850,000	
23. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	1,000 000	950,000
24 MANILA YACHT CLUB	650 000	
25 METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	180 000	160,000
26. METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	200.000	
27 MT MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND)	500,000	400 000
28 ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	Pls Call	280 000
29 ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	Pls Call	
30 ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	Pls Call	600 000
31 PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB "B"		130,000
32 QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	240.000	
33 RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	250 000	
34 RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600,000	500 000
35 ROYAL NORTHWOODS	Pls Call	Pls Call
36 STA ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	2,100,000	
37. SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	500 000	
38 TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L GOLF CLUB	1,100 000	
39. TAGAYTAY MIDLAND	900,000	
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Buy-in reports send ICTSI shares soaring

SHARES of port operator International Container Terminal Services Inc. sold like hotcakes at the Philippine Stock Exchange on reports that the company agreed to sell International Holding Co. and its Mexican passenger cruise terminal to a subsidiary of Hutchison Whampoa of Hong Kong.

ICTSI shares, which have been among the most actively traded for several days now, yesterday closed at P2.32, 16 percent higher from Friday's closing. Its shares have seen the sharpest increments since April 30, correcting downward only for three days since then.

The performance of its shares also defied the weak market sentiment since the start of the year, rising by a whopping 213.5 percent. It was the third best performer in the battered stock market.

The INQUIRER reported in October last year that Hutchison was keen on buying out its subsidiary, ICTSI International Holdings Corp. or even acquiring a stake in ICTSI. Company officials, however, said there were no negotiations with Hutchison.

Analysts said ICTSI was a fundamentally sound stock except that it was reeling from foreign exchange losses arising from its foreign debts. ICTSI's debts stood at P20 billion as of the first quarter of the year, of the amount foreign obligations accounted for P12.6 billion. Once these debts are settled, they said ICTSI shares should be trading at even higher levels.

Analysts are expecting that ICTSI will be able to come up with a scheme to wipe out its debts. The expectation is that a foreign investor—which is believed to be Hutchison Whampoa—will buy into ICTSI and pump in fresh money to wipe out its debts.

ICTSI said it was willing to sell a 30-percent stake in IIHC. But analysts said that if it were Hutchison finally coming in, the Hong Kong firm would definitely want a controlling stake.

ICTSI and Hutchison clashed over a controversial contract to operate and upgrade a container port in Subic Bay Freeport in 1997. *Doris C. Dumlao*

COUNTRY SHARES
As of May 29, 2001

	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB A/B*	2 0M/2 1M*	Pls Call
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	820 000	850 000
CAMP JOHN HAY	350,000	400 000
CANYON WOODS	-	Pls Call
CAPITOL HILLS	120 000	
CELEBRITY SPORTS	210 000	215 000
CLUB FILIPINO	300 000	330 000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	425 000	450,000*/700,000**
EVERCREST A/B*	130 000*	150 000/170 000*
FONTANA D/C*/B**	88,000/120,000*	90 000/150 000*/280 000**
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**	260,000	270,000/350,000*/450 000**
LUISITA GOLF CLUB	-	550 000
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	400,000/450 000*	405 000/475 000*
MT MALARAYAT A/C* (w/lot)**	395 000	400,000/650,000*/2 0 M**
MANILA POLO CLUB	3 500 000	4 000 000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	850,000/950 000*	900 000/980 000*
METROPOLITAN A/B*	160 000	175 000/180 000*
MIMOSA IND./CORP.*	200 000/350 000*	240 000/550 000*
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	280,000/600 000**	300,000/425 000*
PHILIPPINE COLUMBIAN	85 000	90 000
PUERTO AZUL A/B*	130 000	Pls call*
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	230 000	235 000
RIVIERA A/B*	250 000	280,000/420 000*
ROCKWELL CLUB	600 000	650 000
ROYALE TAGAYTAY A/B*	100 000	120 000/150 000*
SHERWOOD HILLS A/B*/C**	250 000	275,000/350,000*/450 000**
SUBIC BAY IND/CORP.*	300,000/400 000*	PLS CALL
TAT FILIPINAS GOLF A/B*	320,000	350,000/550 000*
TAGAYTAY H-LANDS CC/GOLF*	1 1 M*	450,000/1 2 M*
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	850 000	875,000
VALLE VERDE IND.	175 000	-
WACK WACK	9,500,000	10 M

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Digitel plans $200-M bond float next year

DIGITAL Telecommunications Philippines Inc. (Digitel) is set to issue $200 million worth of convertible bonds to finance the rollout of its cellular network in July next year.

Digitel's cellular service was supposed to be launched in July this year, but it was deferred because of difficulties in raising funds.

Digitel director Lance Gokongwei said the company was hoping to finally launch the project in July next year but added it would still depend on the outcome of the $200-million bond flotation.

Digitel president and CEO John Gokongwei Jr. expressed confidence that they would not have a hard time raising the $200 million within 30 days after the bond issuance.

"The bonds will be offered first to the stockholders, and if they don't want it, the bonds will be offered to everybody," he said.

The bonds have seven years maturity and will bear a 10-percent interest. They will be issued as soon as the flotation is approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Digitel's plan to venture into the cellular phone business aims to complement its landline operations.

Digitel is the telecommunications arm of the Gokongwei-owned JG Summit group of companies. It has a subscriber base of 365, 476 as of end-2000. *Abigail L. Ho*

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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Monday, May 28, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	6,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	75	75	74	74	418,400
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	41	41	41	41	19,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	213	214	210	212	262,860
Philippine National Bank	46.5	46.5	46.5	46.5	29,400
Phil. Savings Bank	28.5	30	28.5	30	11,500
Rizal Comm'l Bkg Corp. A	26	26	26	26	4,000
Security Bank Corp.	19.75	20.5	19.75	20.5	600
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	10,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	228	250	228	250	400
Manulife Financial Corp.	1315	1335	1315	1330	8,920
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1070	1090	1065	1085	2,240
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	40	40	39.5	39.5	3,900
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	1,370,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	680	685	680	685	6,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	350,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.9	3	2.9	3	12,000
Piltel	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	100,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	665	665	655	660	42,550
Ivantage Corp.	0.94	0.94	0.9	0.91	390,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.042	0.042	0.041	0.042	87,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	42	42.5	41.5	41.5	20,600
Manila Electric Co. B	60	60	59	60	868,800
Petron Corp.	1.88	1.88	1.84	1.86	4,760,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	230,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.2	300,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.96	2.34	1.94	2.32	22,283,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.36	0.41	0.36	0.41	40,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	50,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	120,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	122,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	500,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.2	558,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13	13.25	13	13	296,500
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	27	28	26.5	28	265,000
RFM Corp.	1.02	1.08	1.02	1.08	1,333,000
San Miguel Corp. A	46	46	46	46	11,900
San Miguel Corp. B	50.5	51	50.5	51	150,000
Universal Robina Corp.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	10,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	2,608,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.44	1.52	1.42	1.52	3,334,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12	12	11.5	11.75	3,800
A. Soriano Corp.	0.45	0.47	0.45	0.47	680,000
APC Group Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	10,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	3,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	450,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.36	988,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	10,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	50,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	250,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	50,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	175,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	24.5	24.5	24	24	208,100
Global Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.23	910,000
Ionics Inc.	12	12	12	12	49,300
Ipeople Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	10,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2	2.02	2	2	136,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.74	0.75	700,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	1,170,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.88	1.9	1.88	1.9	8,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	103,000
Philtread Hdgs. Corp. B	4	4	4	4	100,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.52	0.5	0.52	100,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	6	6.5	6	6.5	11,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	50,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	270,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5,000
Music Corp.	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	33,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
Pryce Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	500,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	360,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.5	14.75	14.5	14.75	87,400
Steniel Manufacturing	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.42	0.42	160,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.45	0.46	0.45	0.46	590,000
Leisure & Resorjs Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	250,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	700,000
Philippine Racing Club	5	5	5	5	52,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Abs-Cbn Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	40.5	40.5	39.5	40	54,100
Cosmos Bottling Corp.-Pref.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	4,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	500	500	495	495	9,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3	3	3	3	1,000
Jollibee Warrants	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	3,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	35,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.033	0.033	0.032	0.033	47,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	2,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5	5	4.9	4.9	8,106,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	2,460,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31	7,880,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	1,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.04	2.06	1.98	2	5,482,000
SM Development Corp.	0.79	0.79	0.77	0.77	30,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.3	5,786,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	900,000
MINING					
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	1,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	370,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	40,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.006	0.006	*0.006	0.006	1,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.004	0.004	20,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	500,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	650,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	2,000,000
Pacifica	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	2,600,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	773,420	103,692,720.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	222,558,950	216,475,220.00
PRO	30,845,000	91,047,080.00
Mining	25,560,000	450,200.00
OIL	5,600,000	64,800.00
GRAND TOTALS:	285,337,370	411,730,020.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	593.82	DOWN 7.83
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,941.25	DOWN 12.31
PRO	515.64	DOWN 14.03
Mining	1,207.62	DOWN 7.56
OIL	1.46	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	757.94	UP 1.26
Composite	1,395.12	DOWN 15.11

NO. OF ADVANCES: 16; NO. OF DECLINES: 52; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 41; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 109; NO. OF TRADES: 2,779

CURRENCIES

May 28, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.161980	1.000000	50.4490
Japan	Yen	0.009641	0.008297	0.4186
United Kingdom	Pound	1.652568	1.422200	71.7486
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.148981	0.128213	6.4682
Switzerland	Franc	0.654858	0.563571	28.4316
Canada	Dollar	0.752286	0.647417	32.6615
Singapore	Dollar	0.644148	0.554354	27.9666
Australia	Dollar	0.603062	0.518995	26.1828
Bahrain	Dinar	3.082339	2.652661	133.8241
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.309836	0.266645	13.4520
Brunei	Dollar	0.643757	0.554017	27.9496
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000101	0.000087	0.0044
Thailand	Baht	0.025526	0.021968	1.1083
UAE	Dirham	0.316400	0.272294	13.7370
Korea	Won	0.000902	0.000776	0.0391
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.860600	43.4164
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.440018	22.1985
France	Franc	0.152450	0.131198	6.6188
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.390523	19.7015
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.062542	3.1552
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.021334	1.0763
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000444	0.0224
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.144743	7.3021
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004293	0.2166
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005172	0.2609
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.021334	1.0763
Ireland	Punt	1.269739	1.092737	55.1275

Power bill: Selling a dead weight and averting a crisis

By Raul C. Dancel
and Christine A. Gaylican

(Second of a series)

WHAT is the Omnibus Power Bill? Beneath the legalese and technical mumbo jumbo that make up the bulk of this bill is the fact that taxpayers will ultimately be at its receiving end. If everything turns out the way the government says it will, then electric bills will be cut, dollars will come pouring in like manna from heaven, jobs will be created and the country will inch closer to economic nirvana. If it slips the other way, however, some ₱200 billion worth of debts that the government incurred due to sheer incompetence will become a burden for the Filipino taxpayer. Worse, it will create a cartel that will be able to manipulate power prices.

SPECIAL REPORT

On the surface, the Omnibus Power Bill may just be what the economic doctor prescribed. It seeks to restructure the energy sector to bring down the cost of generating and distributing electricity, "the real enemy of your power bill," according to Energy Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

According to a government briefing, the bill will cut power rates for industrial and commercial users by 27 percent. For consumers, there will be a mandatory 5-percent reduction equivalent to about 30 centavos per kilowatt-hour in their electric bills. The bill will free as much as ₱27.6 billion that the government spends to pay off the debts of the National Power Corp., money that can be better spent on new classrooms, farm-to-market roads and bridges. It also means new direct investments and access to close to $1 billion in soft loans from multilateral institutions.

So why all the fuss about the power reform bill? Why not just get it over with so that the country can move on?

The problem with the power-reform bill, critics say, is that it shifts the burden of paying for Napocor's debts from the state to the taxpayer. The government expects to sell Napocor for $4.5 billion. The state-run power firm, however, has racked up debts amounting to $6.7 billion. The government would shoulder what would be left of Napocor's debts. Essentially, the equation for the average taxpayer is a 30-centavo-per-kwh reduction in their electric bills in exchange for some P200 billion worth of debts.

The government maintains the equation isn't that simple.

Napocor a dead weight

The power reform bill is largely about how the government plans to sell Napocor and get rid of a dead weight.

Energy officials argue that Napocor has been run so badly over the years that taxpayers are ending up footing the bill. Camacho, the energy secretary, said this year alone, Napocor would lose some P17 billion. The government covers for such shortfalls, and it gets the money from the taxes it collects.

The solution then, as far as the government is concerned, is to let the private sector take a crack at running Napocor. If they do badly, then they, not the taxpayers, will bear the burden.

Camacho, an investment banker who led Deutsche Bank's Philippine office, said Napocor "is a very inefficient producer of power."

"If you were given a business with a 98-percent leverage, it is hard to imagine how you could be efficient," he said. "Napocor has $6 billion worth of debts. On a nominal basis, the net present value of its obligations on its IPP (independent power producers) contracts is probably at 90-percent debt and 10-percent equity. There is no company with a capital structure like that that could survive."

The energy secretary added that since Napocor is a state-run corporation, politics often play an obstructionist role.

"Political considerations, for a time, has constrained the business operations of Napocor. It is most important to understand what is going on with Napocor and how this has affected our power rates and what needs to change," Camacho said.

Shifting the burden

"As far as the government is concerned, the privatization of Napocor has to happen now. This year alone, Napocor will lose P17 billion, but since Napocor cannot borrow on its own and relies on government guarantees, Napocor will only add burden to the already burgeoning budget deficit," Camacho said. These guarantees amount to about P35 billion each year.

Camacho stressed that the power reform bill would "shift this financing and guarantee burden from the government to the private sector." Without this burden, the government can save as much as P160 billion over the next five years, he said.

"The passage of the power bill would allow the national government to channel funds intended for the power sector to other basic priorities such as education, irrigation and other infrastructure projects," he said.

The government, Camacho added, would also be able to generate some P3.74 billion worth of taxes each year from the operations of the private firms that would acquire Napocor's assets.

Averting a crisis

There is a more pressing reason to sell Napocor. Studies have shown that in five to six years, the country will again experience an energy crisis unless Napocor can put up new power plants and transmission facilities to cover rising demand for electricity.

"While we have excess power today, Napocor, with its finances, is not in a position to maintain its current supply. By year 2006-2007, if identified projects are not built, we will have a power shortage," Camacho warned.

Energy experts estimate that demand for electricity will go up by about 51.1 percent over the next 10 years. This means some 9.844 megawatts in additional capacity will have to be put up to prevent a shortage.

Napocor currently has a program to build new power plants and transmission facilities to cover for some 2,600 megawatts in additional output.

The Power Development Plan will entail investments of about P382 billion. The biggest chunk—some P325 billion—will be spent on building new power plants while the rest will go to linking up the Leyte, Mindanao, Negros and Cebu grids.

The Manila Electric Co. and independent power producers in the provinces, meanwhile, are committed to putting up their own facilities that will generate an additional 2,200 megawatts There is still a shortfall of about 5,000 megawatts. The power reform bill is seen as an answer to this problem.

"Because of its current financial position, Napocor is no longer in a position to build or contract additional capacity through new power plants. The power bill will open the door for private investors to finance the needed capital requirements for these," Camacho said. *(To be continued)*

'Mr. John' says he's ready for retirement

By Abigail L. Ho

IS CORPORATE Philippines' "Mr. John" taking a backseat?

Business tycoon John Gokongwei Jr., main man of the JG Summit group of companies, yesterday disclosed that he was considering retiring from a game he has had a love affair with for over six decades.

"I'm still going to work, but not regularly," he said. "No more everyday 9-to-9 job."

Gokongwei said he was giving himself three more months. "Get back to me in three months. I may or may not retire, but I'll let you know about my decision in three months," he told reporters.

In three months, Gokongwei will turn 75.

Gokongwei said his retirement had nothing to do with age or health. He said he considered himself still young enough and still capable of running a business empire as big as his. "How do you see me? I'm very healthy! *Pwede pa!*" he said with a hearty laugh.

He said his children are already ably running his companies, and he is confident he is leaving everything in capable hands.

"My son is very capable," he said, referring to his only son, Lance.

Gokongwei said he had been thinking of retiring since he was 65, "but there are so many things that I can see. 80 percent of our business (happened) in the last 10 years. Supposing I wasn't here the last 10 years, I don't know if the 80 percent would have happened."

In the past 10 years, the country has seen the Gokongwei empire grow. The Robinsons chain of malls, Cebu Pacific Air and Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc. are all in the country's top 100 corporations.

Robinsons has earmarked funds to open four new shopping malls in Pampanga, Iloilo, Novaliches and Cubao this year and another four next year.

Gokongwei said when he retires, planning a new business won't be in his sights. He has, after all, "enough businesses," he said.

"I intend to rest and enjoy myself. I want to travel. In fact, I'll be taking a cruise next Sunday," he disclosed.

GOKONGWEI

That cruise is far from being his first step toward retirement.

"It's a Forbes magazine cruise from Barcelona to London, so there will be different lectures everyday. It's all work-related, but I'll enjoy myself," he said.

Gokongwei says he just wants to travel to different places.

"Maybe I'll stay in the British Museum or the Metropolitan. I would like to stay one month in New York, one month in San Francisco. I have flats there, not houses, but just two-room flats. I'm also thinking of buying a flat in London," he said.

As for his plans of permanently leaving the country, he said he had none.

"I love this country, except the shooting and the killing," he said in jest.

Aside from traveling, Gokongwei said he would also like to concentrate on philanthropic work.

Right now, the Gokongwei group already has a children's library that people can just walk in to free of charge. It is planning to put up 39 more libraries all over the country. It also has a foundation that, among others, supports a technical school.

"We have $40 million in income a year. We have to spend that," he said.

Gokongwei said his plans aren't final yet.

"Nothing is sure in life. That's why I'll get back to you in three months," he said.

Gov't won't shoulder Napocor's stranded costs

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry yesterday assuaged critics of the proposed Omnibus Power Bill that the government would not shoulder indiscriminately all of the stranded costs of independent power producers.

Trade Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II said there would be no automatic absorption of the stranded costs of the National Power Corp.'s contracts with independent power producers.

He said some critics feared that with the reforms in power distribution and marketing, the government would be forced to shoulder all guaranteed contracts entered into by the government with independent power producers in the 1990s.

The government had to resort to signing contracts with independent power producers in the 1990s to cope with a massive power shortage during the period because of Napocor's low capacity.

Roxas said the government was keen on establishing a special body that would review which contracts would be taken over by the government.

"The review body is specifically meant to avoid paying any contracts that have been onerously or illegally entered to by the IPPs to preserve public interest," Roxas said.

He said the review body would be contained in the implementing rules and regulations that would be drawn up once the Omnibus Power Bill is approved by Friday.

Roxas said the government fully supports the latest bicameral version of the power reform bill because it addresses the main concerns of consumers that the move would only shift the monopoly in the power sector from the government to the private sector.

Roxas said the new bicameral version lowers the open access threshold from 2 megawatts to 1 megawatt to address the issue on monopoly and price manipulation.

Equity limitation for any single group or family has been scaled down from 30 percent to 25 percent. Roxas said all of these refinements were meant to ensure that the power reform bill would be beneficial to consumers.

The government is worried that further delays in the passage of the power reform bill could lead to massive power outages by 2005 and block the country's access to multilateral lending agencies that have pegged the release of their loans on carrying out reforms in the power sector.

Meralco cuts sales forecast

By Ronnel W. Domingo

POWER distributor Manila Electric Co. has downgraded its electricity sales growth forecast for the year to 5 percent year-on-year from 7.1 percent.

Last year, Meralco registered 7.8 percent growth in electricity sales.

Meralco vice president Rodolfo Quetua told reporters yesterday on the sidelines of an energy forum that the lower forecast took into account the political uncertainty in the country in the first quarter, a slowdown in the local manufacturing sector and the high cost of power.

Meralco "A" shares, open to local investors, were up 50 centavos to P42.50 while Meralco "B," open to foreigners, was down 50 centavos to P60.

Quetua said Meralco was hit by a political crisis that gripped the country in the fourth quarter of last year, when then President Joseph Estrada was tried by a Senate impeachment court for his alleged involvement in an illegal numbers racket. That crisis spread to early this year, culminating in Estrada's ouster by a military-backed civilian revolt.

Gov't seeks new loan for Napocor

THE GOVERNMENT has asked the Asian Development Bank for a new $250-million loan for the National Power Corp.

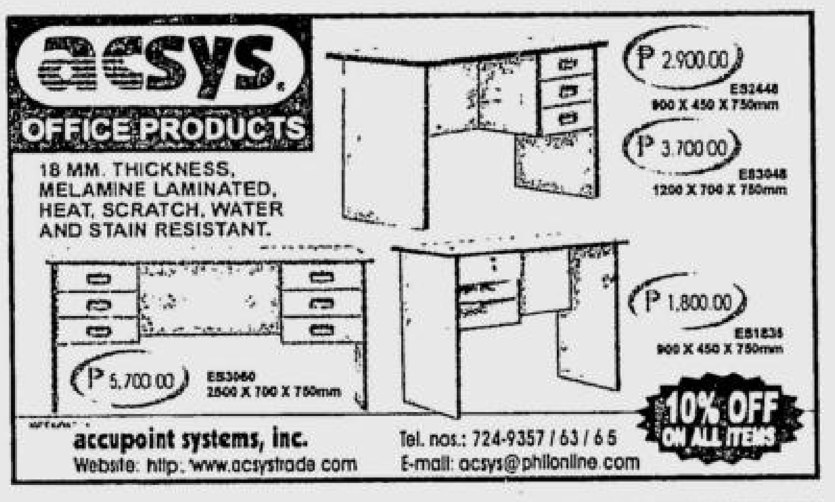
"The government is interested in completing necessary expansion and upgrading works prior to the disposal (of Napocor's assets)," ADB senior analyst Geoffrey Wilson said in a speech yesterday before the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Wilson told the group, "a suitable provision has been included in our forward lending program."

Congress is currently working on a bill seeking to privatize Napocor. If the bill is approved, the state-run power firm will be sold in pieces to private firms.

The Macapagal administration hopes to earn over $4 billion from the sale of Napocor, but since the power firm owes close to $7 billion, the state will have to absorb some $2 billion worth of debts.

The ADB already has some $100 million in the pipeline for the completion of an integrated grid that will link up the entire archipelago. *Ronnel W. Domingo*



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No one may use the trademark Hi-Tecpoint without the prior consent or authority of PILOT CORPORATION. PILOT CORPORATION has appointed COSMOS BAZAR, INC. with address at 571-573 Quintin Paredes Street, Binondo, Manila, as its exclusive distributor of PILOT writing instruments bearing the trademark Hi-Tecpoint in the Philippines.

Authorized for sale in Philippines:

Reg: 43144

PILOT Hi-Tecpoint V5
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The public is advised to refrain from purchasing fake Hi-Tecpoint ballpens. Buy Hi-Tecpoint ballpens only from COSMOS BAZAR, INC. and its authorized outlets to ensure that the ballpens you buy are genuine and of good quality. PILOT CORPORATION AND COSMOS BAZAR, INC. disclaim any responsibility for any quality claims resulting from the use of fake products.

SYCIP SALAZAR HERNANDEZ & GATMAITAN
Counsel for Cosmos Bazar, Inc.
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Greenhills LA 975 5BR Spool 7Pkng Rush Call 681-2457

San Juan L. Bagulo LA 375 FA 400m^2 4br Den 727-7506

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PASIG

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•South DBO • 721-5226

•Bes. Ayala Hts w/View• 696 P21T/m^2 DBO 721-5226

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RIZAL

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Binangonan Aing N'tional Hi-way 2,752m^2 P1,500/m^2 Call 652-0227

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LOT

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Center for Health Development II
Southern Isabela General Hospital
Rosario, Santiago City
Tel. No. (078) 682-8123

INVITATION TO BID

The Southern Isabela General Hospital (SIGH) hereby invites suppliers to a sealed bidding for Drugs and Medicines, Hospital Medical and Surgical Laboratory, X-ray, Dental, Office and Janitorial Equipment and Supplies for CY 2001.

Only responsible and duly accredited manufacturers/suppliers as certified by the DOH are qualified to participate in the Bidding. Bid documents can be secured from the SIGH PBAC Secretariat, Administrative Services Section, Southern Isabela General Hospital, Santiago City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 starting **MAY 28, 2001**.

ACTIVITY	
Submission of Pre-qualification Documents	May 28-June 7, 2001
Pre-bid Conference	June 18, 2001, 9:00 AM (Monday)
Submission and opening of Sealed Bids of Drugs & Meds., Hospital & Medical Equipment and Surgical, Lab, X-ray & Dental Supplies	June 21 starts at 9:00 AM (Thursday)
Office & Janitorial Supplies	June 22 starts at 9:00 AM (Friday)

The venue for Pre-bid conference and opening of Sealed bids will be at the Administrative Conference Room.

The SIGH reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the proposal received, or to accept such bids as may be responsive and advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ASUNCION N. ABAYA, M.D.**
Chief of Hospital I

(PDI - May 29 & 30 2001)

NOTICE

The public is therefore urge to buy **RK** motorcycle chains from authorized agent, **EASTON ENTERPRISES CO., INC.**, or from any of its authorized dealers or outlets. (Easton Enterprises Co., Inc. is the only one distributor of **RK GOLD CHAIN** for motorcycle in the Philippines).

Some unscrupulous parties were found distributing and selling **fake, look-alike or counterfeit RK** motorcycle chains in violation of the intellectual property rights under **Republic Act 8293**, otherwise known as the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines.

Warning, is hereby given to such unscrupulous parties to immediately cease and desist from their illegal activities, otherwise they will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Reward is awaiting to a kind person who can notify or inform us those fake dealers or sellers of **RK CHAIN**.

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Law Offices
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Makati Avenue corner Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue
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(PDI – May 29, 2001)

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

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•OFC Staff 9134470 Aynah

Ofce Staff Daisy 912-3506

•Offc Staff 9134470 Ludy•

Office Secretary
Computer Technician
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Optometrist 733-4061

SALES CLERK AT LEAST 2ND YR. COL. APPLY AT 812 ELCANO ST., BINONDO MLA. BET. 8:30-9:30 AM BRING NBI, RESUME W /PICTURES, BIRTH CERTIFICATE & EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATE IF AVAILABLE

Secretary & Sales Rep Call 743-0128 • 743-9362

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TShirt Sale 4383147

Work From Home 8937903

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Estate of the late JOSE C. RECIO JR. was extrajudicially settled thru self adjudication by his heir as per Doc. #28 Page #7 Book #1 series of 2001 of Notary Public LILIA PILARES-DE VERA of Quezon City
(PDI-May 15,22 & 29,2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Jaime T. Dela Torre has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs as per Doc.#419; Page#83; Book#X; Series of 2001 before Notary Public May Z. Redor of Tayabas, Quezon (PDI-May 22, 27, June 5, 2001)

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OBITUARIES

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₱230 per column centimeter
(All prices exclusive of E-VAT)

DEADLINE
for reservations / cancellations / corrections
Monday to Sunday
12:00 noon
Day before publication

I am
the way,
the truth
and
the life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me.
John 14:6

Atty. MARCIANO ESPIRITU CONCEPCION "MARCING"

Has peacefully joined our Creator on 23rd May 2001
at the age of 70 at Anaheim, California, U.S.A.

His beloved wife **WELHELMINA**; and loving children **Raymund, Rosarita, Rebecca, Remedios, Rosemarie, Rubyann, Robert, Raquel, Rowena, Anthony** (†), **Stella**; brothers and sisters, sons and daughters-in-law, grandchildren, relatives and friends request everyone to pray for the repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Forest Lawn Mortuary and interment on 30th May 2001 at the Gardens of Heritage, Forest Lawn, Hollywood Hills, California.

I am the resurrection and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 11:25-26

Illustrious Bro. Pantaleon S. Sarmenta

33°IGH - A. & A.S.R.
Past Master Cabanatuan Lodge 53 – F & A Masons

Peacefully joined his Creator on May 27, 2001 at the age of 89
and reunited with his dearly beloved wife Ruth del Rosario
who went to be with the Lord on May 27, 1997.

His loving children **Inocencia, Ruth-Mamerta** and **Edgar Callanta, Pantas-Ricardo & Lorlin, Sergio & Polly**; grandchildren **Edward-Pantaleon (PAN), Arthur (MON), Jonathan & Bimbing**; nephews, nieces, brothers-in-law; sisters-in-law and other relatives praise God for his life.

His remains lie in state at the United Methodist City Temple at Sanciangco Street corner Del Pilar Street, Cabanatuan City.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 31, 2001 after the 9:00 a.m. necrological service at the Cabanatuan City Cemetery.

Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"
John 11:40

Vernon Eduardo "Bombi" Dineros Pineda

October 11, 1955 – May 26, 2001

His bereaved parents **Dr. Esteban** and **Josefina Pineda**; and his loved ones **Heather Mcguirre, Kaitlyn Rose** and **Chandler Christopher Pineda, Susy** and **Orly Mercado, Jenny & Tong Pineda, Cindi** and **Kokoy Villanueva, Michelle** and **Moy Pineda, Yvonne** and **Alex Viyar**; relatives and friends, lift **Bombi** to our Lord Jesus Christ who has promised us eternal life and peace.

His remains lie at Loyola Chapels at Guadalupe, Makati.

A memorial service will be held at the UCCP-Ellinwood Malate Church on Sunday, June 3, 2001 at 1:00 p.m.

Interment will follow immediately at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

Ester V. Saysay

Widow of the late **Atty. Moises B. Saysay**
of Hulong Duhat, Malabon City
February 10, 1910 – May 28, 2001

Her loving son **Herminio** and wife **Ramona**; grandchildren **Christine** and **Bency**; sister **Belen V. Wisco**; other relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Malabon North United Methodist, Hulong Duhat.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 31, 2001 at 3:00 p.m. at the Eternal Gardens after the 2:00 p.m. Memorial Service.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

DR. VICTORINO M. MONES

of CLSU, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija

who passed away in the grace of our Lord on May 4, 2001

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

IN LOVING MEMORY
OF THE
FIRST DEATH
ANNIVERSARY
OF

COL LEONARDO A MENDOZA, JR (Ret)

who died on May 29, 2000

His wife **Angelita**; and children **Ma. Aurora, Bernadette** and **Leonardo III**; wish to reiterate their thanks to relatives, friends, townmates, officemates, the GSIS, the PMA Class '63 and all those who prayed and condoled with them in their hour of greatest sorrow.

Masses will be offered at 6:30 a.m. at the St. Michael Post Chapel and the Holy Child Post Chapel (BNS), Fort Bonifacio, Metro Manila.

AMALIA TAN vda. de SALAZAR

(1902-2001)

Ha vuelto a los brasos de su Creador
el 27 de Mayo de 2001

Sus desconsolados hermanos **Vicente y Chary**, hijos **Mel y Angie; Chuck y Monina; Tony y Araceli; Mirek y Grace; Ramon y Lourdes; Myrna; Melo y Marie; Steve y Mila; Karl y Tessie** piden una oracion por el eterno descanso de su alma.

El cuerpo presente se halla en el Charity Chapel, Don Bosco, Makati.

La Misa funeral se celebrara a las dos de la tarde, el Miercoles, 30 de mayo.

El entierro se llevara acabo en Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones the following establishments can help you.

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DULOS MEMORIAL SERVICES
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Manuguit, Manila
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MARIAN MEMORIAL CHAPELS
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16-18 G. Tuazon corner Loreto Street, Sampaloc, Manila
Tels. 749-3679, 781-1772

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298 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City
Tels. 372-5084, 410-9286 / 87

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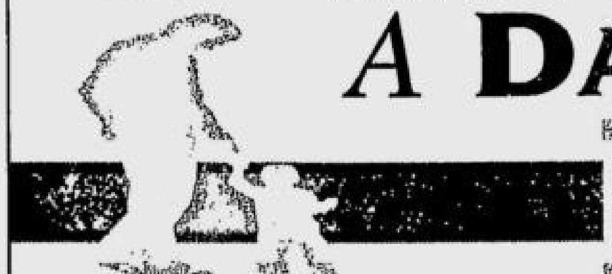
MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL
Arellano St., Dagupan City
Tels. (075) 515-5960; 515-6529, (0919) 348-7131

CLASSIFIEDS

A DAD'S DAY Treat



Let the world know how much your dearest father means to you by writing him a deeply felt love note in the widest read and circulated broadsheet in the country.

On June 17, Fathers' Day, **INQUIRER Classifieds** will publish personal ads dedicated to the fathers at a discounted rate of **P50** per line or **P150** per column centimeters.

For more information, visit any INQUIRER branch or call **897-2535.**

- Prices are VAT exclusive
- Rate is applicable on the June 17 issue only

SAMPLE ADS

Happy Fathers' Day Dad!
love,
Issa

size: 1 col x 4 cm
cost: P660 vat inclusive

Happy Fathers' Day Tatay Thank you for everything. I love you. Rose

size: 3 lines
cost: P165 vat inclusive

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo
Quezon City

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Office of the Secretary of National Defense (OSND) invites interested parties to pre-qualify and to bid for the operation of the DND canteen.

Bidders are requested to submit the following documents/requirements for pre-qualification on or before 4 June 2001 at 10:00 AM at the Procurement Branch, Office of the Administrative Services, DND, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, telephone number 911-8118.

1. SEC/DTI Registration
2. Articles of Incorporation/Partnership
3. Latest Business/License Permit (2000)
4. Audited Financial Statements (attach ITR) for the last two years
5. VAT Registration Certificate
6. List of canteens operated by the bidder during the last 2 years

Inquiries for the details and particulars on Instructions to Bidders, bid documents, and other details shall also be provided during office hours at the Office of Administrative Services, OSND. A pre-bid conference shall be held on 4 June 2001 at 2:00 PM, DND Social Hall, 3rd Floor, DND Building, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Deadline for submission of bid proposals and opening of bids will be on 13 June 2001, at 10:00 AM at the same venue.

The OSND reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality and award the contract to the bidder whose proposal is the most advantageous to the government as evaluated by the OSND, Bids and Awards Committee (OSND BAC).

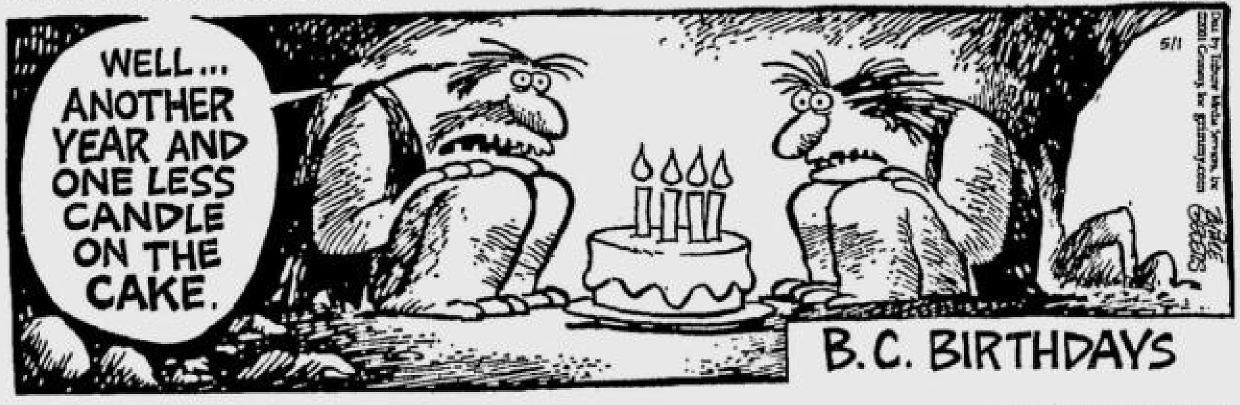
Atty. RICARDO D. BLANCAFLOR
Assistant Secretary
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI -- May 27 & 29, 2001)

COMIC Relief

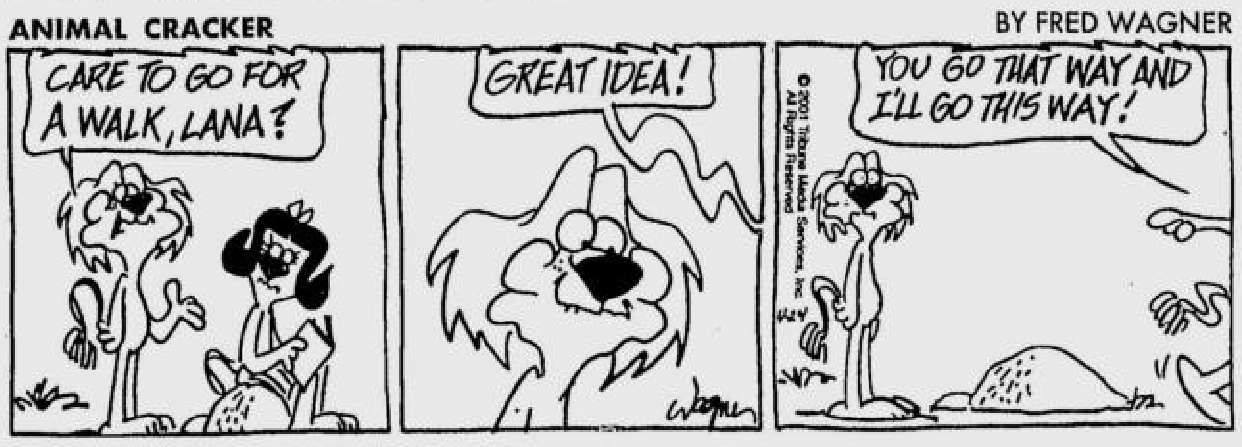
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


WELL... ANOTHER YEAR AND ONE LESS CANDLE ON THE CAKE.
B.C. BIRTHDAYS
5/1

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


CARE TO GO FOR A WALK, LANA?
GREAT IDEA!
YOU GO THAT WAY AND I'LL GO THIS WAY!
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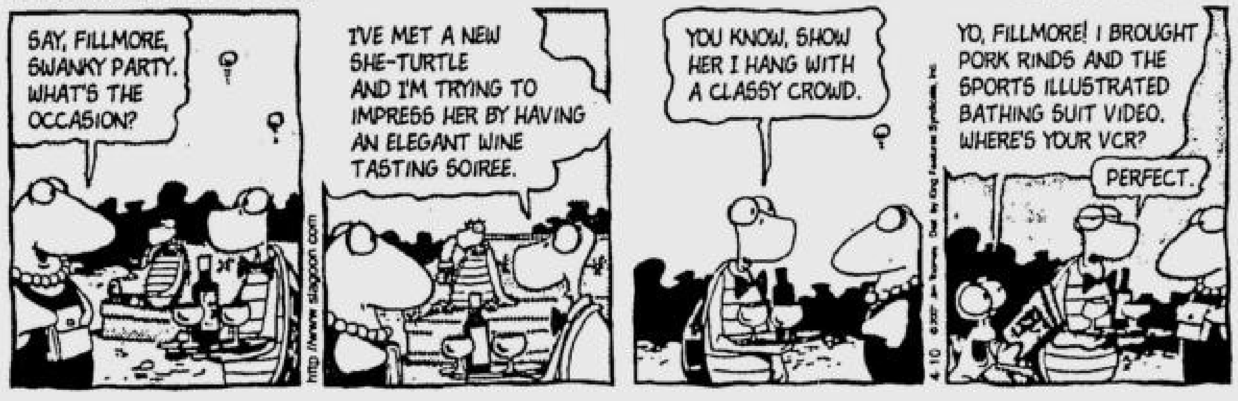
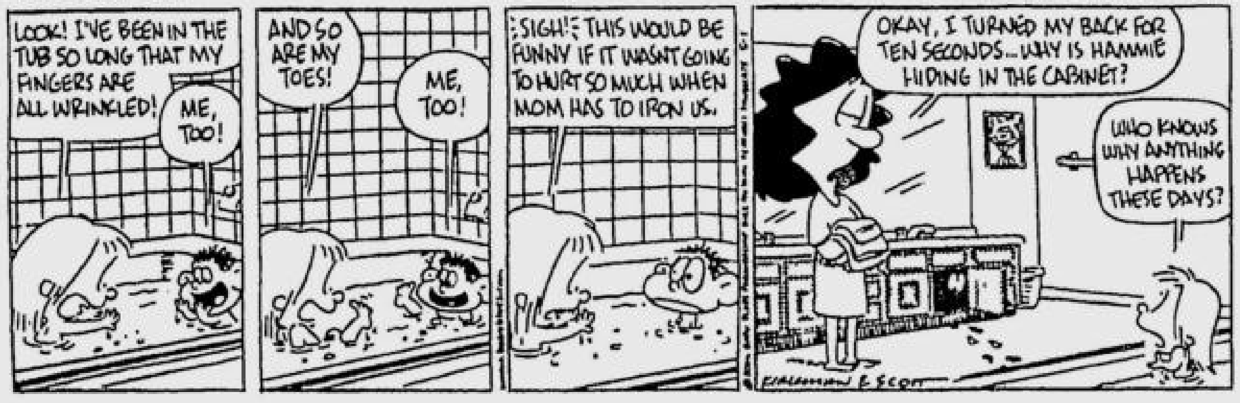
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


SAY, FILLMORE, SWANKY PARTY. WHAT'S THE OCCASION?
I'VE MET A NEW SHE-TURTLE AND I'M TRYING TO IMPRESS HER BY HAVING AN ELEGANT WINE TASTING SOIREE.
YOU KNOW, SHOW HER I HANG WITH A CLASSY CROWD.
YO, FILLMORE! I BROUGHT PORK RINDS AND THE SPORTS ILLUSTRATED BATHING SUIT VIDEO. WHERE'S YOUR VCR?
PERFECT.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


LOOK! I'VE BEEN IN THE TUB SO LONG THAT MY FINGERS ARE ALL WRINKLED!
ME, TOO!
AND SO ARE MY TOES!
ME, TOO!
SIGH! THIS WOULD BE FUNNY IF IT WASN'T GOING TO HURT SO MUCH WHEN MOM HAS TO IRON US.
OKAY, I TURNED MY BACK FOR TEN SECONDS... WHY IS HAMMIE HIDING IN THE CABINET?
WHO KNOWS WHY ANYTHING HAPPENS THESE DAYS?
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Bob Hope, John F. Kennedy, Annette Bening, Melissa Ethridge, Melanie Brown, Rupert Everett, LaToya Jackson

Happy Birthday: Get moving. You'll have to start now if you want to turn all your plans into reality. The more you daydream, the further off target you will be. If you use your quick wit and insight, you won't miss a beat. Speak the truth about your concerns and people will listen. Your numbers: 3, 5, 12, 21, 24, 28

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't become angry with someone for his or her shortcomings. You have the wherewithal to pick up the slack and get the job done. You will make new friends or meet lovers if you join a dance or theater group.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't change your plans because of someone else's demands. Think twice: If you give in this time, he or she will expect it every time. Stand up for your rights.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Be careful how you handle co-workers. Don't let anyone push you into doing things that are not your responsibility. Use your intellect and charm to get your own way.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Help others and you'll be helping yourself as well. Your efforts won't go unnoticed and will be rewarded. Be forceful when making decisions, and don't be afraid to push your ideas.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Energetic activities will fill your day. Be prepared to venture into areas that you may know very little about. Be yourself and everything will fall into place.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Deception involving in-laws or so-called friends may be somewhat upsetting for you. Your organizational abilities will come in handy with a group you're involved in.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Children and financial matters may cause worry and limitations. Don't take on too many projects if you wish to do a good job. Changes in your domestic scene may not be to your liking.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't be too forceful with loved ones. You'll experience resistance, which could result in estrangement. You have to let others make their own mistakes and do their own thing.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Travel will bring you cultural knowledge. Contact with foreigners will be beneficial from a professional position. You will easily influence those you deal with.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Family members may present you with difficulties. Don't take on the brunt of the responsibilities by yourself. You will have to forcefully delegate some of the work to your siblings.

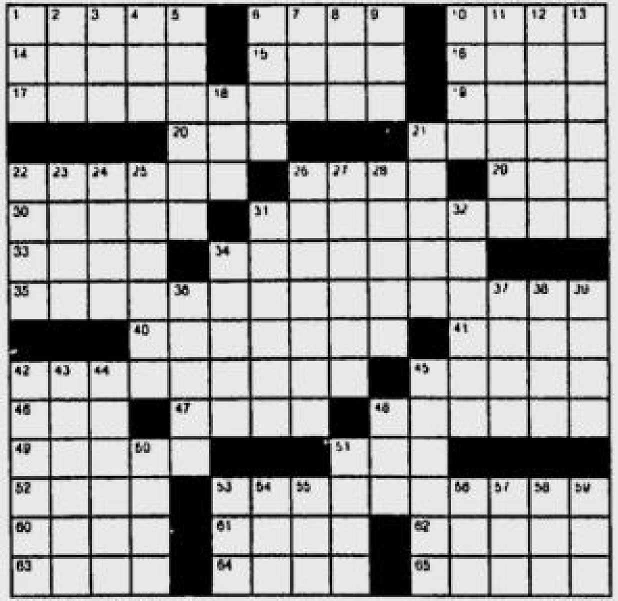
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will be in an argumentative mood if you don't see things unfolding in your favor. Using force will only make matters worse.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your lover will feel rejected if you're putting in too many hours at work. You'll have to juggle your time wisely if you want to avoid discord at home and dissatisfaction at work.

Birthday Baby: You have so many different personalities. One moment you are practical, and the next you are flitting around like a butterfly here, there and everywhere. Your interests and intelligence delight others, but confuse yourself because you want to do it all.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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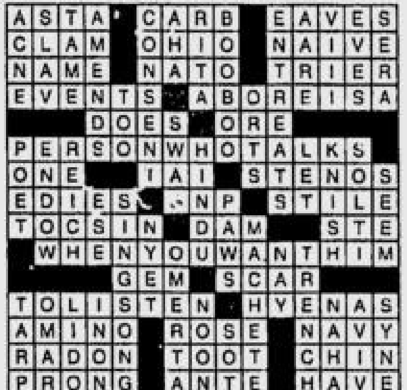
By Annabel Michaels
Williamsburg, VA

4/12/01

ACROSS
1 Paper quantities
6 Leak slowly
10 Misplay
14 Author of "Adam Bede"
15 Jamaican fruit
16 Bowling alley
17 1983 Cronenberg film
19 "Yours, Mine, and __"
20 Abandon truth
21 Come to terms
22 Transpire
26 Handle roughly
29 Break bread
30 Kazakhstan range
31 Out-of-play hits
33 Clytemnestra's mother
34 Do a surfing trick
35 1971 Bogdanovich film, with "The"
40 Trumpet blast
41 Silent greeting
42 Long shots
45 Absolutely not!
46 Scand. country
47 Run out of steam
48 Tranquil
49 Travels by glider
51 Weak in numbers
52 Rim
53 1978 Donen film
60 __ vera
61 Norse Zeus
62 Worship
63 Look after
64 Fruit drinks
65 Handrail post

DOWN
1 Gun it in neutral
2 Yale student
3 Help
4 Shemp's tormentor
5 Long scarves
6 Certain
7 Vanity
8 Shade tree
9 Easy dessert?
10 Whip
11 Hardy's partner
12 Weird
13 Attacks
18 Noisy disturbance
21 "A Delicate Balance" playwright
22 Body of a ship
23 Length times width
24 Paper tablets
25 Nebraska river
26 Mix of cinematic images
27 Soothsayers
28 Marine starter?
31 Agent
32 Solution
34 Language of northern India
36 Roles
37 Own
38 Stove compartment
39 Used to be
42 Upset an incumbent
43 Brain box
44 St. George's victim
45 Composer Randy
48 Understand
50 Critic Rex
51 $5 bills
53 Extinct bird
54 Quirky
55 Compete
56 Poetic piece
57 Pledge
58 Intense anger
59 Elver's parent

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER



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O	N	E			I	A	I		S	T	E	N	O	S
E	D	I	E	S			N	P		S	T	I	L	E
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R	A	D	O	N		T	O	O	T		C	H	I	N
P	R	O	N	G		A	N	T	E		H	A	V	E

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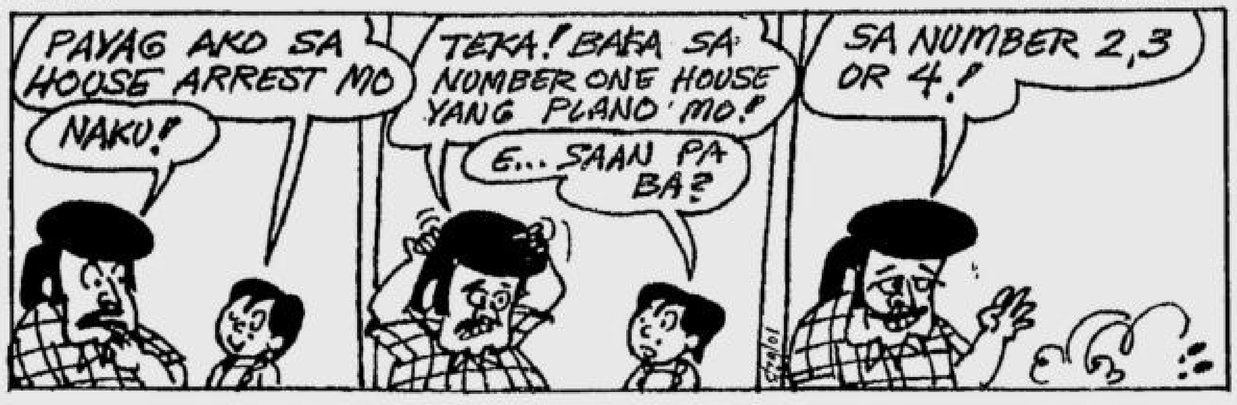
4/12/01

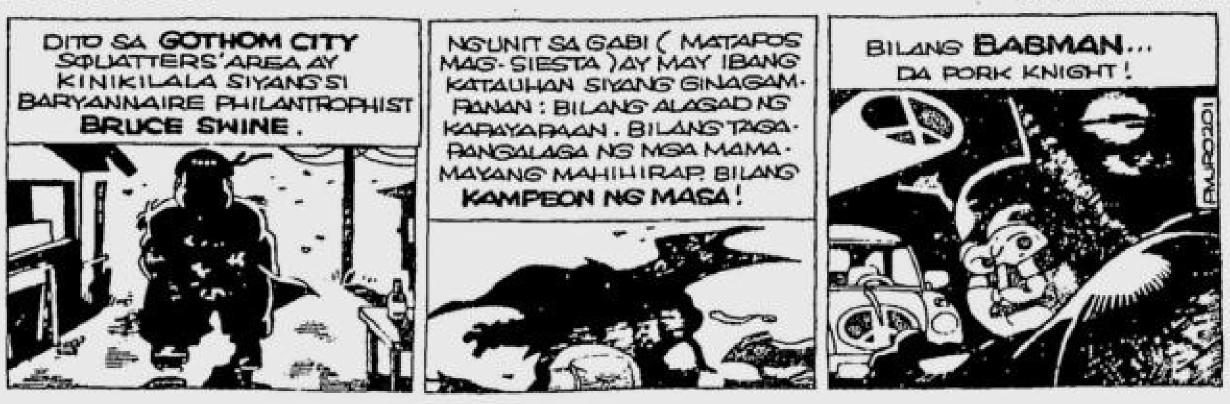
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PAYAG AKO SA HOUSE ARREST MO
NAKU!
TEKA! BAKA SA NUMBER ONE HOUSE YANG PLANO MO!
E... SAAN PA BA?
SA NUMBER 2,3 OR 4!

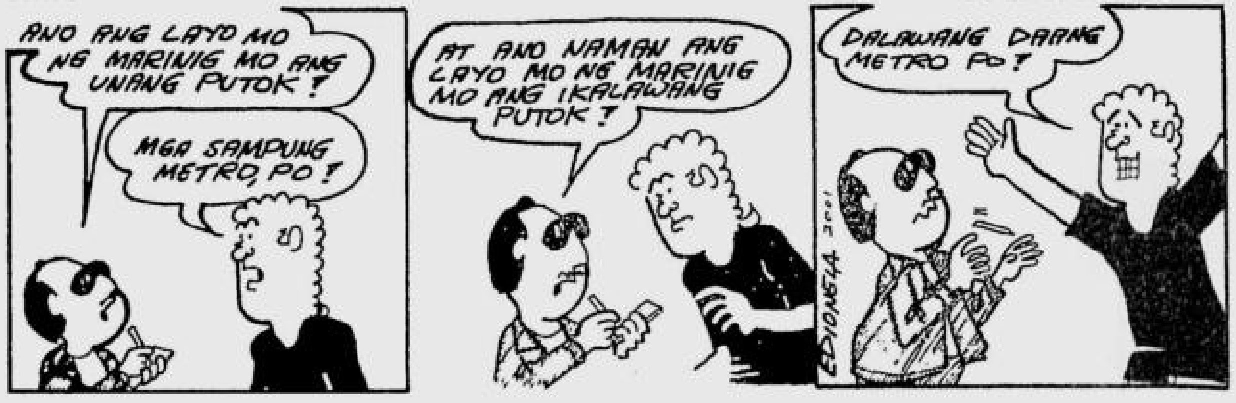
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


DITO SA GOTHOM CITY SQUATTERS' AREA AY KINIKILALA SIYANG SI BARYANNAIRE PHILANTROPHIST BRUCE SWINE.
NGUNIT SA GABI (MATAPOS MAG-SIESTA) AY MAY IBANG KATAUHAN SIYANG GINAGAMPANAN: BILANG ALAGAD NG KARAYAPAAN. BILANG TAGA-PANGALAGA NG MGA MAMAMAYANG MAHIHIRAP. BILANG KAMPEON NG MASA!
BILANG BABMAN... DA PORK KNIGHT!
PMJR0201

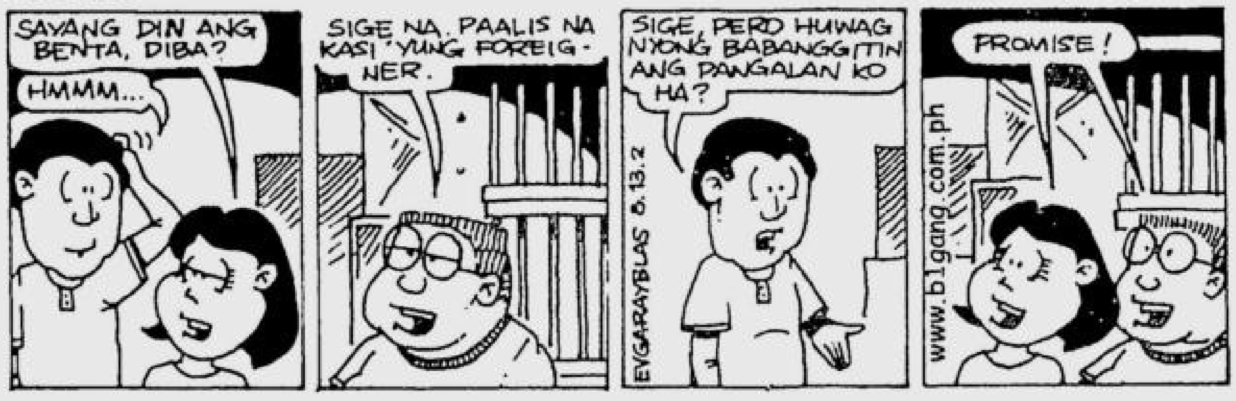
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


ANO ANG LAYO MO NG MARINIG MO ANG UNANG PUTOK?
MGA SAMPUNG METRO, PO!
AT ANO NAMAN ANG LAYO MO NG MARINIG MO ANG IKALAWANG PUTOK?
DALAWANG DAANG METRO PO!
EDIONELA 2001

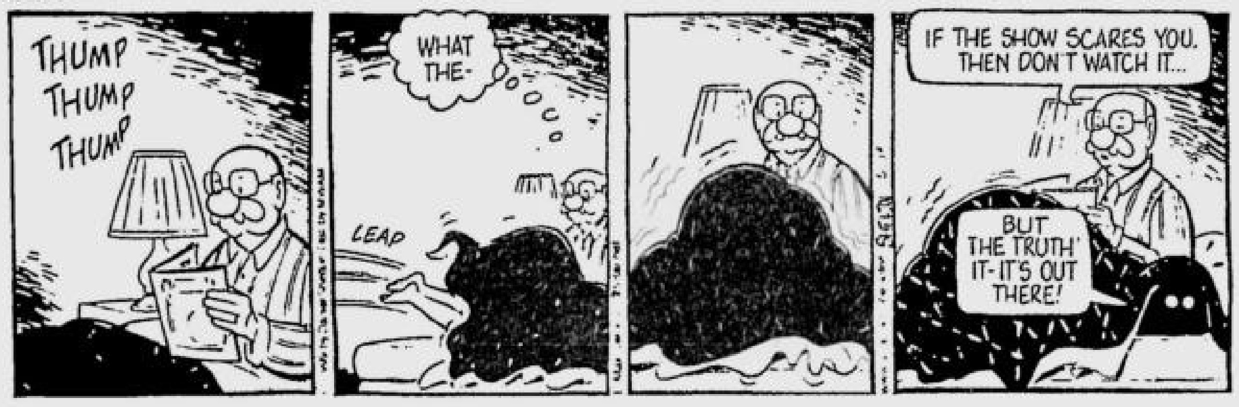
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


SAYANG DIN ANG BENTA, DIBA?
HMMM...
SIGE NA. PAALIS NA KASI 'YUNG FOREIGNER.
SIGE, PERO HUWAG NYONG BABANGGITIN ANG PANGALAN KO HA?
PROMISE!
EVGARAYBLAS 6.13.2
www.b1gang.com.ph

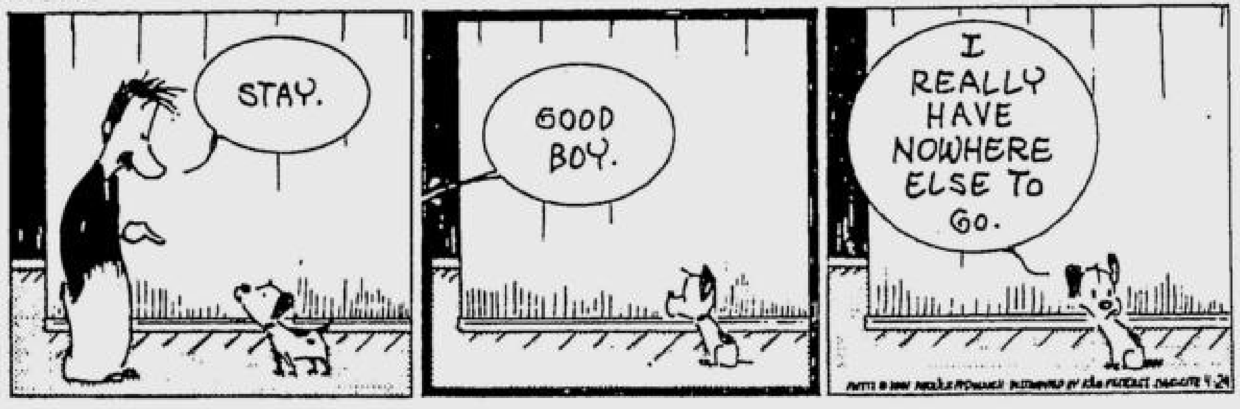
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


THUMP THUMP THUMP
WHAT THE-
LEAP
IF THE SHOW SCARES YOU, THEN DON'T WATCH IT...
BUT THE TRUTH' IT-IT'S OUT THERE!

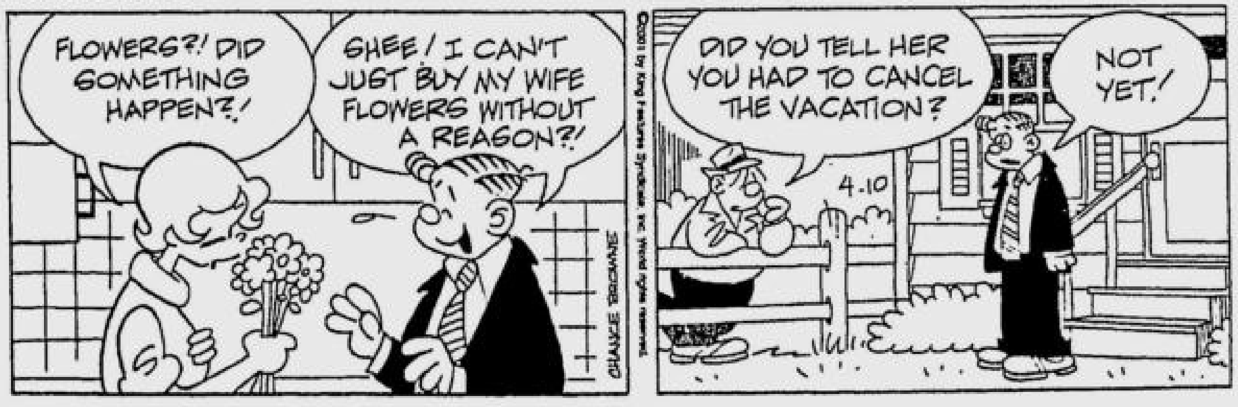
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


STAY.
GOOD BOY.
I REALLY HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.

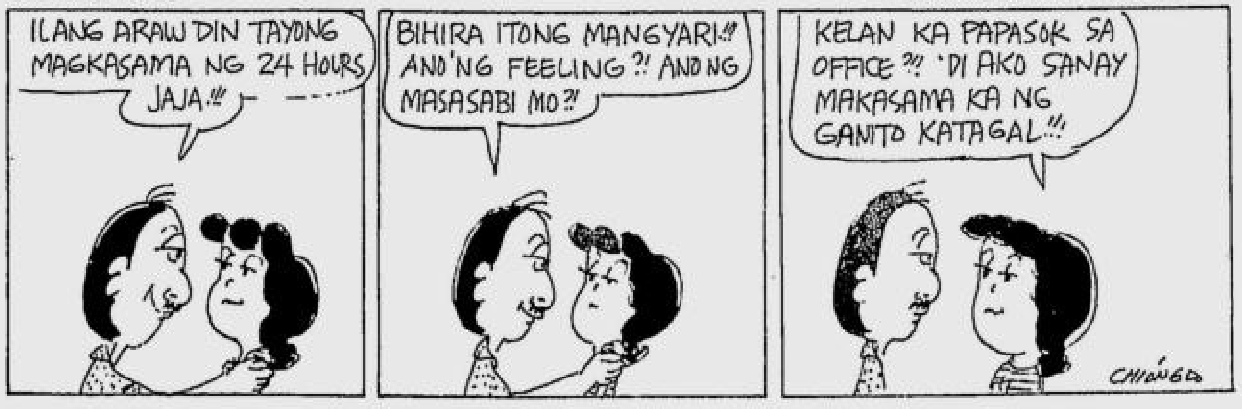
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


FLOWERS?! DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?!
SHEE! I CAN'T JUST BUY MY WIFE FLOWERS WITHOUT A REASON?!
DID YOU TELL HER YOU HAD TO CANCEL THE VACATION?
NOT YET!
4.10
CHANCE BROWNE

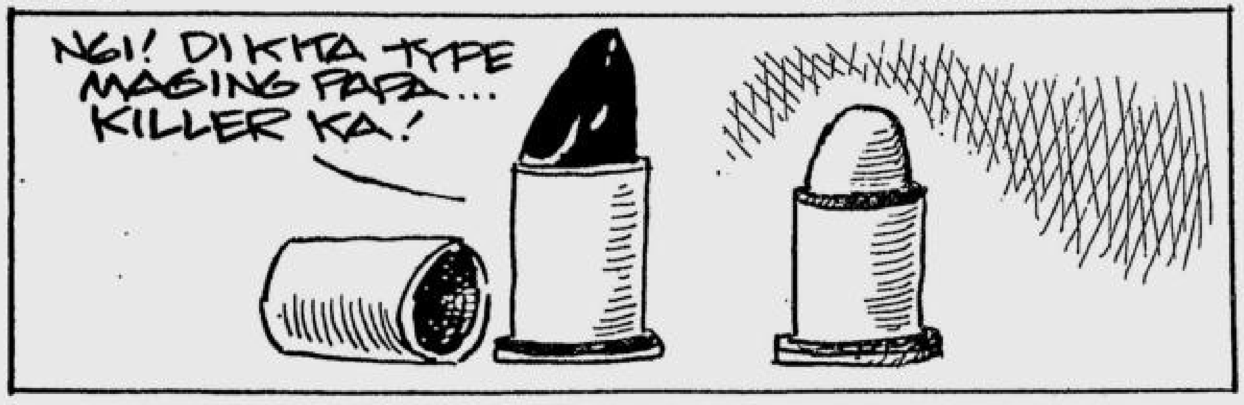
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ILANG ARAW DIN TAYONG MAGKASAMA NG 24 HOURS JAJA!!!
BIHIRA ITONG MANGYARI!! ANO'NG FEELING?! ANONG MASASABI MO?!
KELAN KA PAPASOK SA OFFICE?! 'DI AKO SANAY MAKASAMA KA NG GANITO KATAGAL!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


NGI! DI KITA TYPE MAGING PAPA... KILLER KA!

Architecture with a natural sensibility

THE REQUIREMENT was simple enough—to design a clubhouse for Ayala Greenfield Estates, a sprawling 500-hectare community that sits at the foot of Mt. Makiling and offers a spectacular view of Batangas, Laguna and Tagaytay. The challenge was to create an esthetically pleasing structure that would blend with and enhance the natural surroundings.

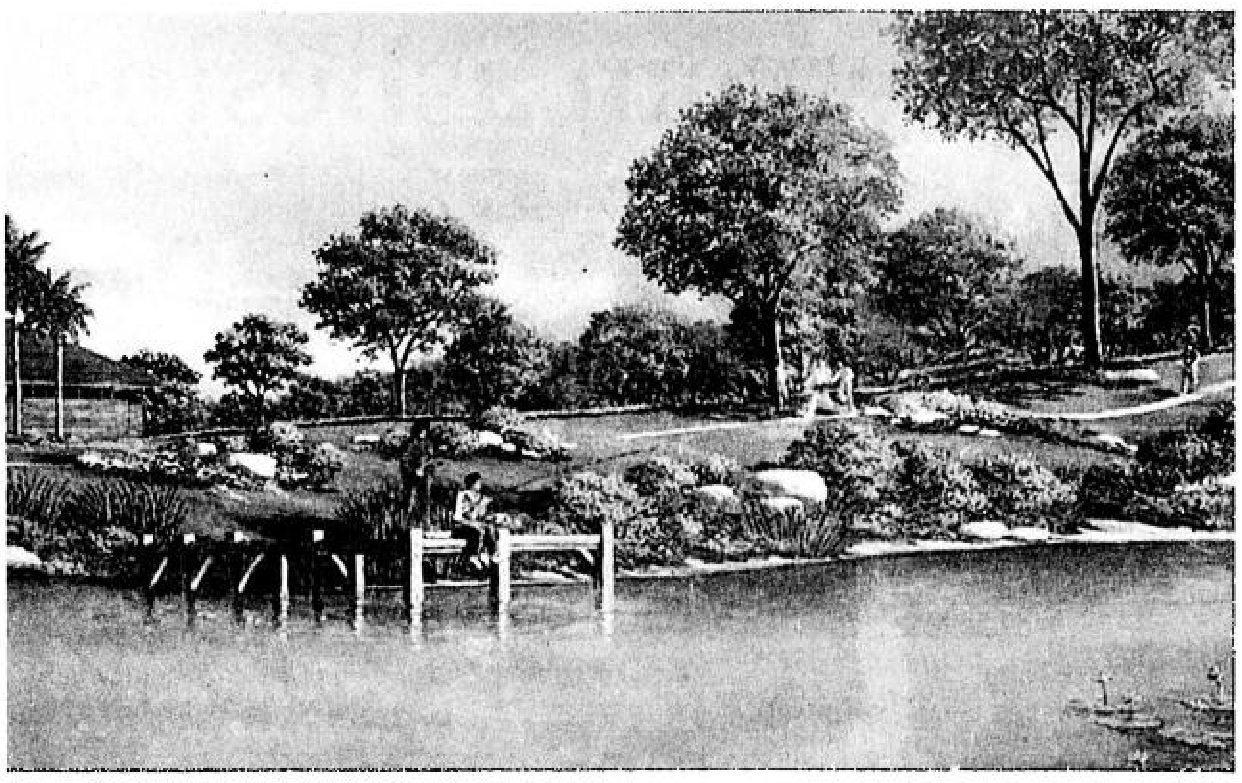
And to draw out the best design, the famed architectural firm of Leandro V. Locsin and Partners turned to a rather unusual method—it held a design esquisse among its partners and design staff. "An esquisse certainly isn't the fastest way to create a design but it's the best way to generate fresh ideas and surface issues," says design consultant Andy Locsin.

Locsin laid down three criteria: the design should be groundbreaking but timeless and economically feasible. The winning design, submitted by the team of partner Orly Mateo, features large, pyramid-shaped roofs and connected pavilions. While it shares a similarity with traditional Balinese architecture with its dominant roofs and linked pavilions, Locsin and Mateo agree that the influence was not meant to be overt. "We didn't consciously set out to do a Balinese design because we wanted to avoid something that was easy to pigeonhole into a particular style. The design is actually an abstraction or simplification of an architectural concept," Locsin explains.

Multitude of views

The natural landscape surrounding Ayala Greenfield Estates and the vision of international urban planners, Aspin Wall Clouston Ltd. Asia (ACL), offer a multitude of views of differing dimensions and magnitude. Since the clubhouse sits right inside the 15-hectare Nature Park with its tree groves, lagoon, orchard and open playing field, the clubhouse has to be able to showcase all of this and still maintain its utilitarian function in style. "We worked closely with the group of ACL and our design was informed by their desire to maintain a 'natural setting,'" reveals Locsin. "The buildings do not attempt to compete with the power of the mountain, rather, they seek to exist respectfully within its influence."

Aspin Wall Clouston is one of Asia's leading independent consultancy firms providing international services in master planning, urban design and landscape architecture. Its recent projects include the Sun Yat Sen Park and Mong Ha Urban Park in Macau, Ocean Park Sky Tower in Hong Kong, the 200-hectare Bumi Serpong Damai Central Park in Malaysia and the Sentosa Island Parkland in Singapore.


AYALA Greenfield Estates boasts of a two-hectare View Corridor that features lush greenery, pools of water cascades and hiking trails.

To take advantage of as much of the view as possible, Mateo and his team did not use a lot of vertical walls and traditional windows. "We opened up as much of the building as practicable," he says. The view deck, located along the edge of the main pavilion, offers a 180-degree view of the surrounding mountains and plains. The main pavilion's elements also flow into the smaller pavilions to create a feeling of space and continuity. Objects and plantings delineate the spaces without closing them off from one another.

Apart from the desire to highlight the landscape, the architecture's openness takes advantage of the steady winds that come naturally to the area, and the structures are engineered to mitigate these winds that put a lot of stress on the structure. Mateo's team designed the pavilions to sit close to the ground to resist being buffeted by strong winds and shaped the high pyramid-shaped roofs to act as deflectors as well as promote air circulation. The group also combined steel, laminated wood and reinforced concrete to ensure soundness of structure and natural integrity.

Locsin enthuses about the tremendous psychological benefit of the design. "When you occupy the building, you feel the strong synergy between the landscape and the structure." One of his firm's objectives when designing architecture is the feeling of "rightness" that the client should feel upon first entering the place. And with the clubhouse, he says that its members "can actually feel the power of nature and envision the kids running around in it."

Something different

The architecture of the clubhouse is actually a deviation from the typical European-inspired designs that have dominated the scene for the last couple of decades. Locsin says the market has always been influenced by their counterparts in more temperate countries. Indeed, a lot of clubhouses have a characteristic heaviness that is more evocative of European hunting lodges than tropical havens. The developers, tired of designs dictated by market forces, approached their firm with a directive to try out something different. "If you notice, the design is simpler and much more spartan. We didn't put all those unnecessary *borloloys* like keystones," he says. "We have always believed that there is more power in the architecture of simplicity and honesty.

"We look at the clubhouse as an education for us, our client as well as the market," Locsin says, adding that their designs have evolved since the time when his father, the late national artist Leandro Locsin, started designing the Ayala's first crop of buildings in Makati. But while he isn't afraid to challenge the market's view of how architecture should be, the second-generation designer still believes that architectural creativity cannot exist in a vacuum. "As far as we're concerned, our design ideas are nothing if they're not marketable."

Still in its first phase of development, Ayala Greenfield Estates has already gotten the market's attention because of its unique location and the quality of its planning. Apart from the clubhouse that offers amenities such as adult and kiddie pools, card and game rooms, exercise gyms and locker rooms, a clinic, indoor and outdoor basketball and tennis courts, a convenience store and a coffee shop, Ayala Greenfield Estates also boasts of a two-hectare View Corridor that features lush greenery, pools of water cascades and hiking trails.

Ayala Greenfield Estates is the latest development to rise within Ayala South and is a joint undertaking of Ayala Land and Greenfield Development Corp. It is envisioned as a totally integrated community of schools, churches and hospitals as well as commercial and business establishments.

Let's join hands in the campaign vs homelessness

BY CHARLIE V. GOYAREB

GOYAREB

IN ALL of its 27 years, it was Creba's first baptism in the rough-and-tumble of directly campaigning for public office. The goal was for party-list representation in Congress. As of Monday, the final outcome is yet to be known as the counting of votes is rather slow. It was both a refreshing experience as well as an exasperating one caused by a disinformation campaign by some party-list claimants. In any case, the campaign proved to be an eye-opener for us.

The expression of support from organizations and individuals, most of whom we hardly knew or never met before, followed by positive acts to indicate real commitment, pointed to a kind of groundswell that augers well for our cause. Remember, part of Creba's long-term approaches is the creation of a comprehensive home finance system and the establishment of a Department of Housing and Urban Development to back up a sustainable housing program for both formal and informal sectors, along with a host of social and economic measures to create more job opportunities and reenergize the national economy.

Although we have been at it for years, overall, our election campaign amounted to—as never before, being in a new public arena for us—a campaign against homelessness in this country.

The overwhelming response from the real estate and housing industry itself was more than what we expected. The support showed that in general there is a consensus on what ails the policy thrusts of the past, and that closer government-private sector partnership is required to push through an aggressive housing program—one that will address the crisis of homelessness, particularly for the low-income and underprivileged sector.

On the other hand, the continuing campaign of disinformation launched by other sectors, particularly, certain incumbent party-list representatives in the House of Representatives, against Creba and other professional party-list candidates, is quite unfortunate. Capitalizing on the discontent among the ranks of the poor, these quarters have attempted to exploit the current unrest by turning the party-list contest into a "class struggle" between the rich and the poor. Purportedly representing the "marginalized sector," they twisted the law to suit their own similarly twisted interpretation of the Constitution. But a reading of the Party List Law and the Constitution and Constitutional Commission proceedings on party-list representation in Congress will quite clearly show that the system is for all: marginalized or not. A Supreme Court ruling will soon clear up the issue.

Now that the elections are over, Creba is calling on all groups or sectors and political parties of whatever persuasions, to join us in banding together toward achieving the common goal of helping the poor and underprivileged sector. No one group could claim a monopoly of any effort to alleviate the condition of less fortunate Filipinos. Let us unite in the continuing crusade against homelessness and for much-needed reforms in the housing program. This is what we will continue to do even after the election, win or lose.

(Goyareb is the national president of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations.)

CREBA DONATION TO NAYONG KABATAAN

The Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) will donate proceeds of the Creba Cup Golf Tournament at the Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club on June 1 for the benefit of the Reception and Study Center for Children (Nayong Kabataan), a government child-caring institution under the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Creba president Charlie V. Gorayeb, second from left, and Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Juliano Soliman sign the agreement. Other signatories, from left, are lawyer Luis B. Pangilinan Jr., chair, Creba sports-fellowship committee, and Social Welfare Assistant Secretary Celia C. Yangco.

Top firms sign up for Cebu trade expo

ON ITS ninth straight year, organizers of the Construction Show Cebu 2001 announced the roster of exhibitors who have already signed up for the industry expo set for June 1-4 at the SM City Cebu Trade Hall.

To date, close to a hundred booths have been booked marking an annual average participation growth rate of 30 percent. Construction Show Cebu is the largest and longest-running industry trade event in the Southern Philippines.

Participating firms include Filmon Hardware Inc., Teresa Marble Corp., Wirtgen Phils. Inc., Elektro Werk Inc., JK Werkzeuge/Germany, Hamburg Int'l Sales Corp., Atlanta Industries Inc., Boral Plasterboard Phils. Inc., Escario Granite Stone Industries, Technoresins Industrial Inc., Andorra Tile Roofing Inc., Asia Pacific Insulation Corp., Solahart Phils. Gopez Corp., Cebu Oversea Hardware Co. Inc., Polytex Marketing Corp., Tamsons Enterprises Inc., Riviera Filipina Inc., Euroasia Marble & Granite Inc., Archi-Line Inc., Cemex Phils., Budget Builders, Eurotiles Industrial Corp., Glassworks Industries Inc., HSD Computers Pte. Ltd. Co., Mach Tools Inc., K-Plast Inc.;

Neltex Dev't Corp., Petronne Trading Corp., Feon Interiors, Multi-Resources Bldg. Products Inc., Excel Coil Coating Corp., Kent Polymutan/Phoenix Building Systems, Boysen Paints, CIPS Inc., House of Laminates Inc., Central Lumber Corp., Cebu Fiberglass Center Inc., Interlock Sales & Services, Futura Decor Prods./EBCO Uni Sales Inc., North & South Builders Supply Inc., Puyat Vinyl Prods., Intelligent Traffic Systems, Siporex Phils., Cebu Belmont Inc., Dutch Boy Phils., United Atlantic Industrial Supply, Techno Trade Resources Inc., Ergonomic Systems Phils. Inc., Stoneworks Specialists Int'l Corp., Worldwide Steel Corp.;

Unique Metal Industries Corp., Microcadd Technologies Co., New Kawara Inc., United Experts Int'l Inc., SSI Shaefer System Phils Inc./Elixir Ind'l Eqpt. Inc., Emerald Vinyl Corp., Puyat Steel Corp., Metso Minerals Phils. Inc., Aceg Steel Prods. Inc., Master Builders Technologies (Phils.), Active Decor Phils. Inc., CPAC Monier, La Casa Della Ceramica, American Standard, Lepanto Ceramics Inc., 3M Phils., Bestank Manufacturing Corp., Ergonomic Systems Phils. Inc., Trilux Electronics & Luminaries Inc., James Hardie Phils. Inc., Royal Tern Ceramics, S.E.A. Olympus Marketing, Nikku Int'l Ltd. Co., Cypress Bomanite, and Global Brands Co. Inc.

Top-of-the-line elevators for high-rise project

MOLDEX Land Inc. has announced the installation of elevators for 1322 Roxas Boulevard, a high-rise residential project along Manila Bay. With only 8 units per floor, 1322 has 10 high-speed miconic elevators from Schindler, also known as the "intelligent elevators" to service each floor. The use of these hi-tech lifts was intended to provide the future residents' utmost comfort and convenience complementing the project's overall design for luxury and elegance.

1322 Roxas Boulevard was so designed to pamper its future residents by giving them conveniences and advantages even in small details like a fast elevator. It is a boon for busy and fast-paced people reducing waiting time and giving them the luxury of extra minutes for other activities.

The project's accessibility makes it possible to reach destinations like the airport, the seaport or the major business districts in a matter of minutes. It has three major access roads for its three entrances and exits from all perimeter streets—along Roxas Boulevard, Padre Faura and Leon Ma. Guerrero Streets.

Apart from easy access, safety is provided via 24-hour security system, CCTV cameras, automatic smoke, fire detection, alarm system with sprinklers and twin access to all residential suites through the main door and the service door. These features sum up the conveniences for the future residents of 1322 Roxas Boulevard.

THE ELECTION CONNECTION

Choosing your insulation wisely

IN TODAY'S open market, choosing which product to buy among competing brands is like picking among election candidates espousing practically the same "good-to-hear" promises. And just like the advice of concerned groups to voters, consumer advocates are voicing out similar reminders to buyers: read, ask questions, discuss about it. In short, "be informed."

Ironically, in an age when data can travel to any corner of the globe with just a click of a mouse, others still resort to disinformation to influence consumers to buy certain products. Indeed, the market system is pretty much like local elections in so many ways. In the home insulation industry alone, rampant lies and half-truths abound. Not surprisingly, it is the distributors of unproven products such as aluminum sheets with air bubble layer and PE foam making much of the noise and most of the offbeat tactics.

Glasswool, a globally accepted insulation material and locally made by Asia Pacific Insulation Corp. (Apic) under the brand names Econoroll, Flexicool and Building Blanket, is at the receiving end of disinformation meant to confuse the market. The real victims, of course, are not glasswools but the consumers who fall prey to these scheming groups

Favorite strategy

Just like their political counterparts, a favorite strategy of crafty businessmen is to simplify complex issues by ignoring other factors. For instance, the aluminum sheet, on the simple basis of its reflective property, is claimed by its distributors as a far more superior insulation than glasswool. What they failed to mention is that light or radiance is just one of three ways by which heat travels, conduction and convection being the other two, and which glasswool effectively stops. Another missing fact is that when the aluminum sheet is installed between the roof and the purlin, there is very little air space (air space is a must for reflection to occur) for the sheet to work and even less light to reflect. In the end, the aluminum sheet with the air bubble layer will not work as promised. And the worst thing is that the consumer has to part with his hard-earned money to find that out.

Another marketing strategy that draws comparison to politics is the uncanny ability of distributors to package a material for something other than its original purpose. The aluminum sheet is best used in areas where it can be exposed to open air and direct light such as in car windshields and not in closed areas such as under the roof. PE foam, meanwhile, because of its closed-cell oil-based low-density polyethylene resin make, is most suitable for cold insulation. It does not handle heat well because of its highly flammable nature.

Biggest weapons

But all is not lost for the consumer. Just like in the elections, vigilance and awareness are the consumers' biggest weapons. And the best way to weed out unworthy candidates (and products) is to convince people to choose wisely. So before buying your home insulation, ask around, read and understand, and discuss real issues. After all it's your family's comfort that is at stake.

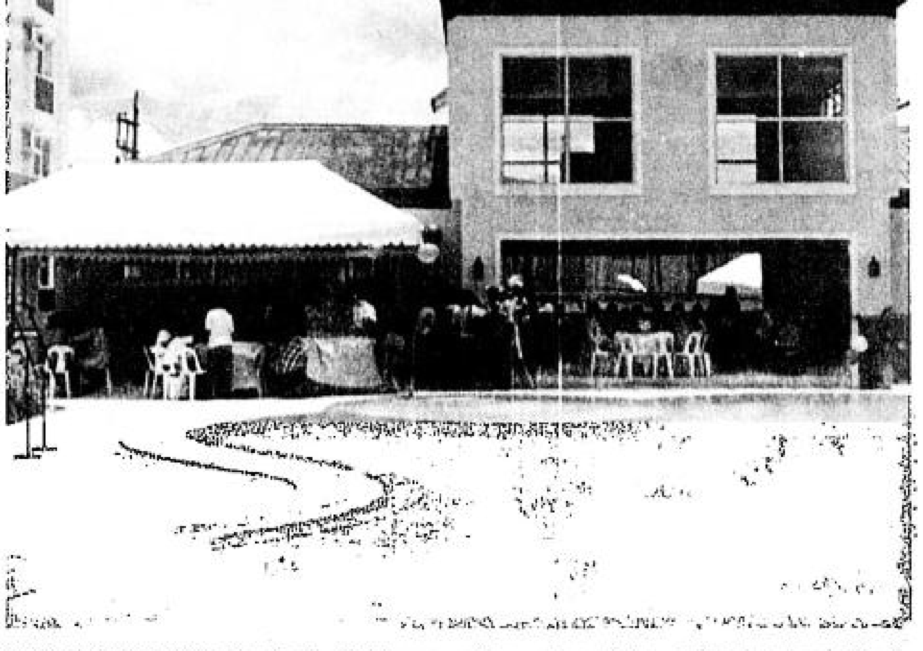
For more information on glasswool and insulation in general, call up Asia Pacific Insulation Corp. at trunklines (049) 545-2312 or 545-2202 or its customer service direct line at (049) 545-7113.

Hampstead Gardens turns over new units

HAMPSTEAD Gardens recently finished and turned over units at its first building (Ipil Building) to eager homeowners, delivering its 12-month promise right on schedule. One of the country's fast-selling realty development projects today, Hampstead Gardens is a mid-rise residential project jointly developed by DMCI, Marubeni Phils. Corp. and OHKI Phils., and targeted at the country's burgeoning middle-income families.

The residential community is composed of a cluster of three 5-story buildings and one 12-story building. The units vary from a 28 square-meter studio type to one-bedroom and two-bedroom homes that include individual drying areas at the roofdeck, kitchen, dining area, living room and toilet and bath. Common areas feature single loaded corridors for extra privacy, elevators for convenience, and a beautiful fully landscaped courtyard. Amenities include a 4-feet-deep swimming pool with an adjoining kiddie pool, a multipurpose clubhouse, parking spaces and jogging path.

Located right at the center of the city, one of the project's many strengths is its accessibility to key trade and business centers such as Makati, Ortigas, Cubao and Manila. Hampstead is also just a stone's throw away from SM Centerpoint, Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, St. Luke's Medical Center, Broadway Centrum, UERM College of Medicine, Don Bosco School, Dominican College and Aquinas School.


THE HAMPSTEAD Garden's Clubhouse with a view of the swimming pool. Partly shown is Ipil building, one of Hampstead Gardens' cluster of residential buildings.

Headed by DMCI Holdings Inc. president Isidro Consunji, the ceremony was also attended by OHKI Phils. president Kunikazo Yamamoto, Marubeni Phils. general manager Manabu Sugawara and DMCI Holdings VP for business development Alfredo Austria.

REAL ESTATE

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

Workers' protection from asbestos unclear

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

CONSTRUCTION workers are among the most obvious potential casualties of asbestos in the Philippines.

Yet, the Chemical Control Order for asbestos of theDepartment of Environment and Natural Resources does not ensure their protection.

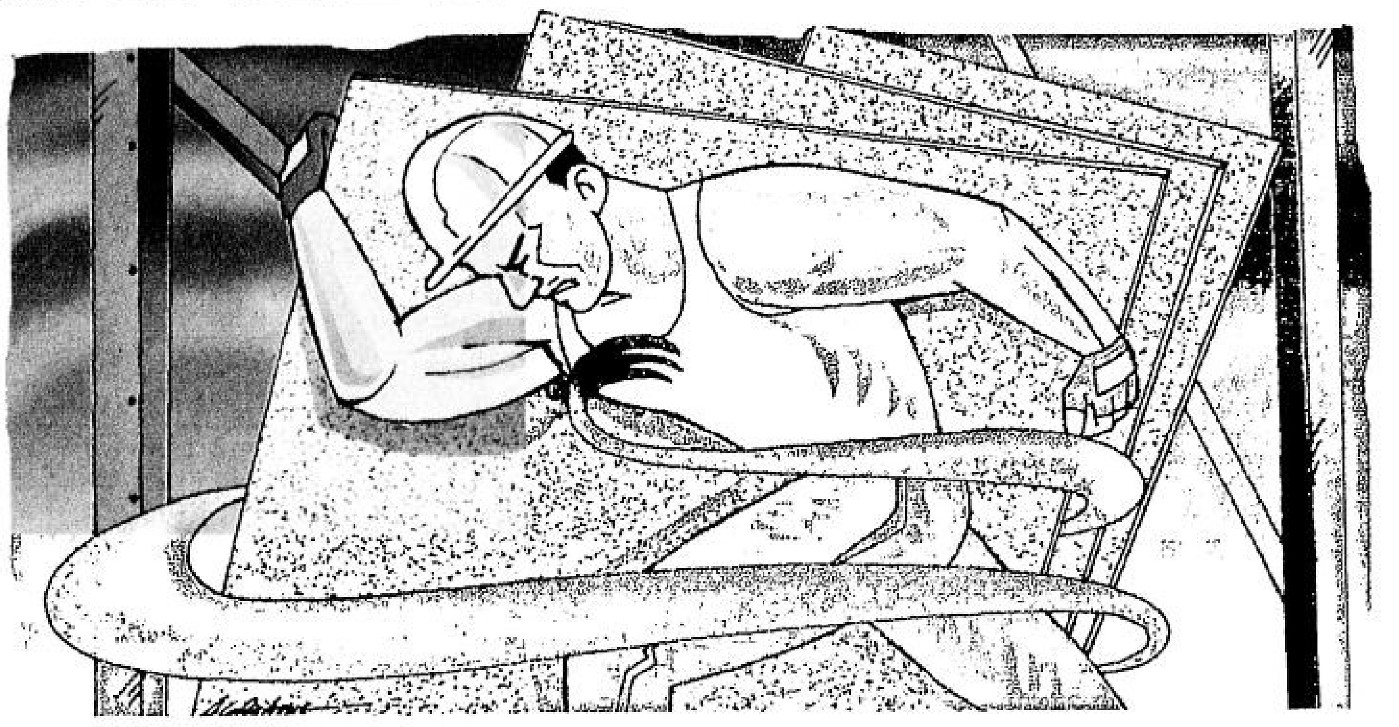
This was revealed by the International Federation of Buildings and Wood Workers-Philippines, as the organization appeals to the government to amend the flaws of the CCO as soon as possible. The IFBWW said there are about 1.5 million construction workers in the country and that there are no exact figures that can be determined as to how many of them have directly dealt with asbestos and for how long.

Asbestos fibers and asbestos dust, once inhaled, can stick to the linings of lungs and intestines and cause the swelling of tissues and the growth of malignant cells.

Asbestos still in use

IFBWW researcher Arturo Boy Nuera said the CCO doesn't cover construction activities. Contractors and developers are not included with business entities required by the CCO to register with the DENR prior to the installation of construction products containing asbestos.

Contractors and developers in the country still use materials for roofs, sidings, ceilings, walls and tiles with asbestos fiber content.



"If importers and manufacturers register with the DENR, it is not the case with the contractors and developers. This only means they are free to purchase asbestos-containing materials at any outlet, and install them without being regulated by the DENR."

Protection to workers

The IFBWW-Philippines' critique on the CCO stated that the CCO is silent on what protection will be applied to all workers in the construction sites, and for those who unload, transport, store and sell or retail asbestos materials and products.

The construction activities, automechanics and the retail of asbestos-containing products are not included in the CCO's scope and coverage, said Nuera.

He added that the DENR's CCO did not mention appropriate personal protection equipment and measures for construction workers in the installation, renovation and demolition of construction materials containing asbestos.

The IFBWW-Philippines said that nowhere in the CCO mentioned the periodic and free physical checkup of workers of companies using asbestos in their businesses. It also added that the Department of Trade and Industry was not involved in regulating the labeling of materials.

"So far, what benefited in the CCO is the asbestos industry. If you will review the CCO, it stated that the information dissemination campaign will involve primarily the DENR and the association of asbestos industry in the Philippines. They are tasked to inform the public. No nongovernment organization (NGO) was involved when there should be," said Nuera.

Interagency committee

Meanwhile, the government has been planning to convene an interagency committee to talk about asbestos by the end of June. This would involve the DTI, Department of Health and the Bureau of Working Condition of the Department of Labor and Employment.

The DENR January 2000 issued a chemical order meant to control and regulate the use and disposal of asbestos into the environment, in line with its policy of minimizing the hazard to human health and environment.

The CCO regulates and controls activities such as importation, manufacturing, the transport, storage and the use of asbestos and disposal of its wastes.

The IFBWW-Philippines, however, said it believes the CCO is coated with flaws and is virtually "toothless," particularly when it did not manifest its intention to protect workers' health from asbestos exposure.

STYLNUL
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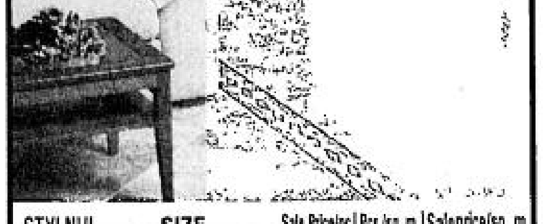

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WALL	20 cm X 20 cm (8" X 8")	P14.40	25	P360.00
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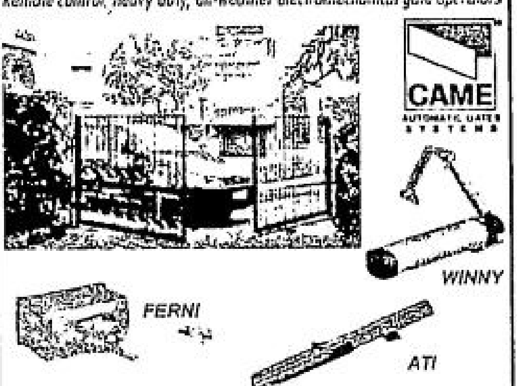

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US-based real estate giant to launch e-marketing site

US-BASED real estate sales and services network Electronic Realty Associates, which is now operating in the Philippines, will soon usher its local clients into the age of real estate electronic commerce with an upcoming website at www.ERAphilippines.com.

As in other markets abroad where it is widely known for marketing operations at the cutting edge, ERA aims to make the Internet a preferred medium for buying and selling properties in the Philippines. "Through online real estate marketing, we intend to gain a competitive advantage and a strategic position in the local property market," said Alyn Red, corporate communications officer of ERA.

Said Red: "It is advantageous to buy and sell online for the main reason that it is hassle-free—one saves time and money since most of the transactions are done via computers. Because of the provision for virtual tours, brokers and their customers can make online site tripping and orientation an option.

"With the rapid spread of business technology solutions, consumers nowadays can purchase just about anything—including real estate—on the Internet, and enjoy a host of electronic conveniences," she added.

Effective medium

Apart from serving as an effective medium for local and international listings and referrals, the ERA website is expected to reach out to new prospects, both locally and internationally. "The website will be a big boost to ERA's brand awareness campaign. It will open up new markets, particularly the seven million overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in the United States, Middle East, Europe and the Asia Pacific," Red said.

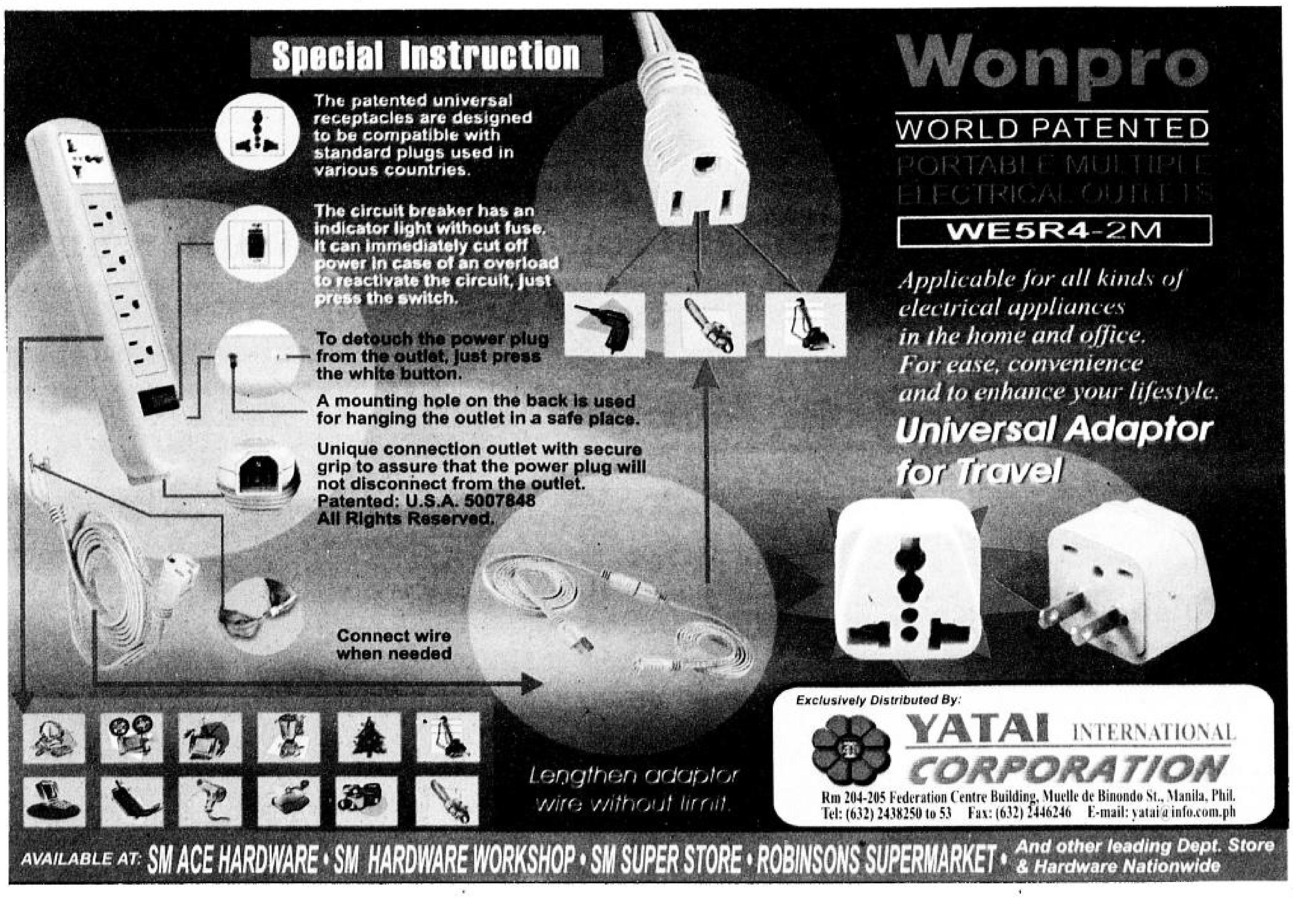
At ERA's website, buying and selling properties worldwide will be made possible through an entire package of search options. Prospective clients can surf for project listings, seek advice from an ERA professional, get ERA homebuyer tips with special guidance as a first-time buyer, find a real estate specialist, choose from the products and services of various companies, contact preferred alliance businesses, access property market analyses and complete a buying or selling transaction with just a few quick mouse clicks.

Besides providing basic information such as a company profile/history, vision and mission statements, business partners and affiliates, the website will feature color photographs and perspectives of properties for sale or lease.

Widest membership base

ERA's website, although not the first of its kind in the local real estate industry, will have probably the widest membership base ever, given its 3,000-strong network of offices worldwide. In addition to Internet-based marketing technology, ERA's global marketing system includes intensive training seminars for franchisees and real estate agents that will surely enhance the selling skills of all prospective ERA sales associates.

Prospective clients may soon contact a friendly ERA representative through salesandservice@ERAphilippines.com. The ERA website is a joint undertaking with World Wide Web Corp., a leading web design, development and hosting firm based at Eastwood City Cyberpark in Libis, Quezon City.



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Urban poor housing sites assured of P77-M loans

TWELVE urban poor housing sites have received this month funding assurance from the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. for the informal settlers' loan applications under the agency's community mortgage program (CMP) to finance the purchase and development of the housing projects.

The NHMFC board of directors, chaired by Secretary Michael T. Defensor, presidential housing adviser and concurrent chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, approved the issuance of letters of guaranty to the said projects upon preliminary evaluation of the loan applications and inspection of the said housing sites.

NHMFC president Angelico T. Salud recommended the issuance of letters of guaranty for an aggregate loan value of P76.8 million that will benefit a total of 2, 521 families.

Under the regular processing lane, the following are the homeowners' associations and their respective loan amounts: La Trinidad Homeowners' Association (HOA), P4.14 million; Samahang Maralita ng Tambakan HOA, P12.32 million; Cabico CMP HOA, P5.08 million; Jacqueline Village HOA, P7.06 million; Samahang Nagkakaisa ng Barangay Roxas, Phase II, P5.65 million;

Echoville HOA (B. Dela Vega Property), P1.66 million; Jeep ni Erap Village HOA, Cluster IV, P9 million; Cluster V, P9.39 million; and Cluster VI, P9.18 million.

Issued a letter of guaranty under the express lane processing system was Kaisa ng Samahan ng Maralitang Taga-Pasacola-Dulo HOA, P3.29 million. For the direct payment of loan proceeds, those issued a letter of guaranty were Samahang Kapatiran ng Taga-Katorse, P4.77 million; and Tan Kiao HOA, P5.29 million.

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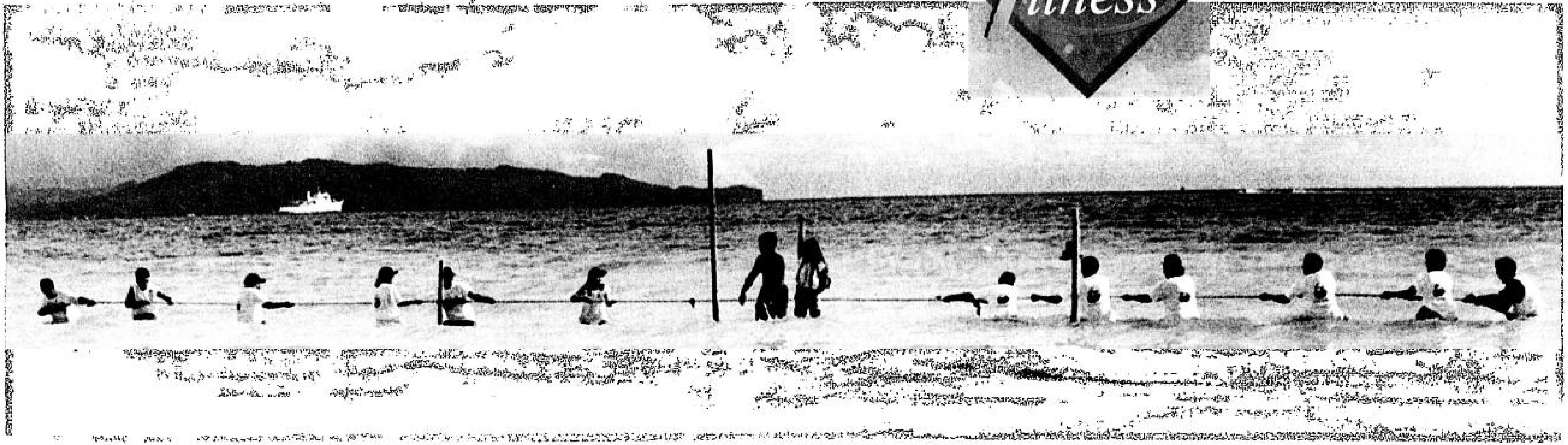

1, 2, 3, PULL. It's not just the team on the other end of the rope that you're up against but the waves and the wind, too, in this Tug of War.

Battling on the beach

By Cheche V. Moral

I WAS a contestant on "Survivor."

No, not *that* "Survivor," silly. I wasn't flown to Pulau Tiga in Malaysia and made to eat rodents, thank you. Neither was I sent to the Australian Outback to endure the rugged terrain and, goodness, socialize with savage beasts. Instead, with 150 others—composed of IT personnel and media people—I was brought by the game host, 3Com Phils., to the virtual party zoo that is Boracay for the event called "3Com Summer." Now how's that for a "Survivor" venue?

3Com is a multinational IT company that provides networking products and solutions. The Boracay jaunt was an incentive to 3Com's partners. In other words, instead of just saying to them, go out and multiply, the company took them to Boracay so they could recharge their batteries and continue to increase their sales output.

The event had for its centerpiece the "3Com Survivor" team-building games.

"We want to educate our partners, with the help of Microwarehouse, our exclusive distributor, about healthy competition while integrating fun," shared Kenneth Palacios, 3Com Phils. country manager. As the 3Com partners are involved in sales, and in effect rivals in their field, the games were designed for them to know more about each other—and their strategies in getting the upper hand in the cutthroat IT industry, as translated by their approach to the games. "3Com and its partners are a family, so they will also learn the value of teamwork," said the young executive. Their individual success will mean success for 3Com, he added.

For the first elimination round, the group was divided into nine teams, with three teams each competing for the first three games—Tug of War, Relay Walk and Trust Walk.

Getting physical

With the "Survivor" theme playing in the background, the games commenced with the Tug of War. It was no ordinary Tug of War as the opposing teams were submerged in the water waist-deep. That meant they had to contend not only with each other but also with the strong late afternoon winds and, consequently, the big waves—a true test of physical strength if there's one. The Pink Team, composed mainly of females, emerged as winners. Well, so much for males being the stronger sex.

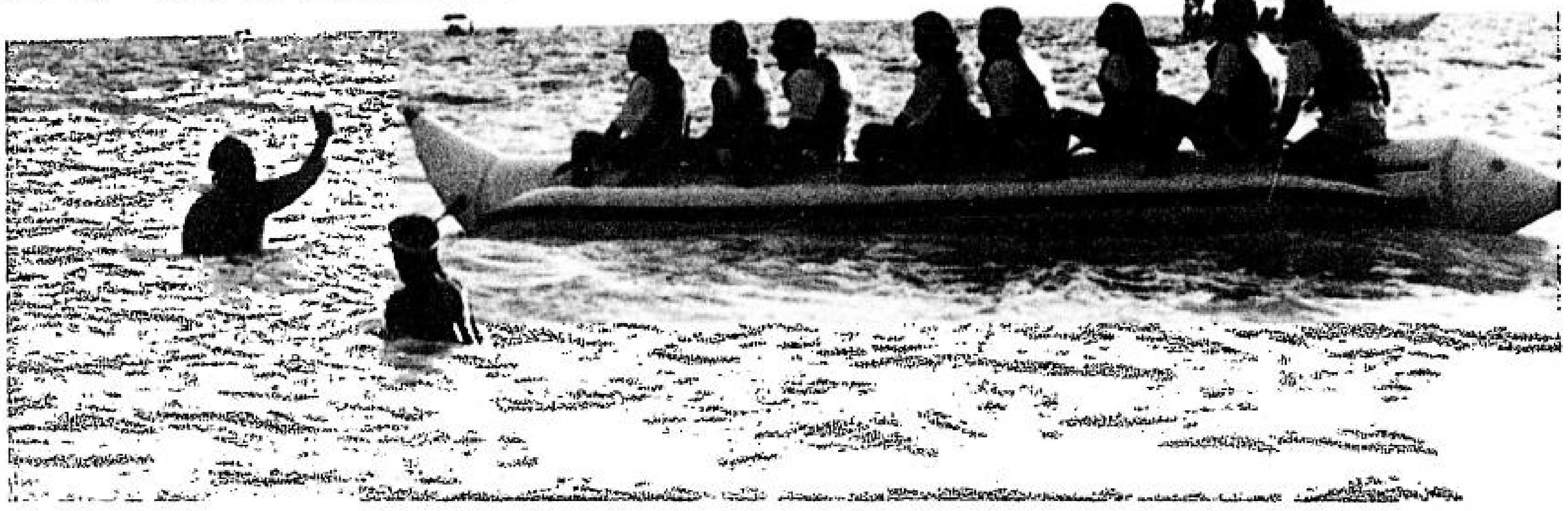
My own team geared up for the next game, the Trust Walk. One team member would be blindfolded (called the Blind Man), while four others would assume posts around him, each holding a letter that spells out 3Com. The object is for the Blind Man—guided by the yelled instructions from the rest of team members—to complete the word 3Com in the right order in the least period of time.

All the teams huddled to decide on their strategies. The first team was called. It was hilarious! "I should have removed my slippers. That way I could have walked faster. I was afraid I'd fall on my face," their Blind Man would later say. The team clocked almost two minutes.

We were next. I would be one of the yellers. The team decided to take the "12 o'clock, 3 o'clock, 6 o'clock, 9 o'clock" route. I thought this was somewhat complicated but it was too late to voice my objections. Our Blind Man was already in the center. We broke our own plan

BATTLING/ p.C2

> You can survive a Boracay experience beautifully anytime but if you're there for some team building, the game gets a lot tougher


ON THE BIG yellow banana boat: Ride the waves—and don't fall off!

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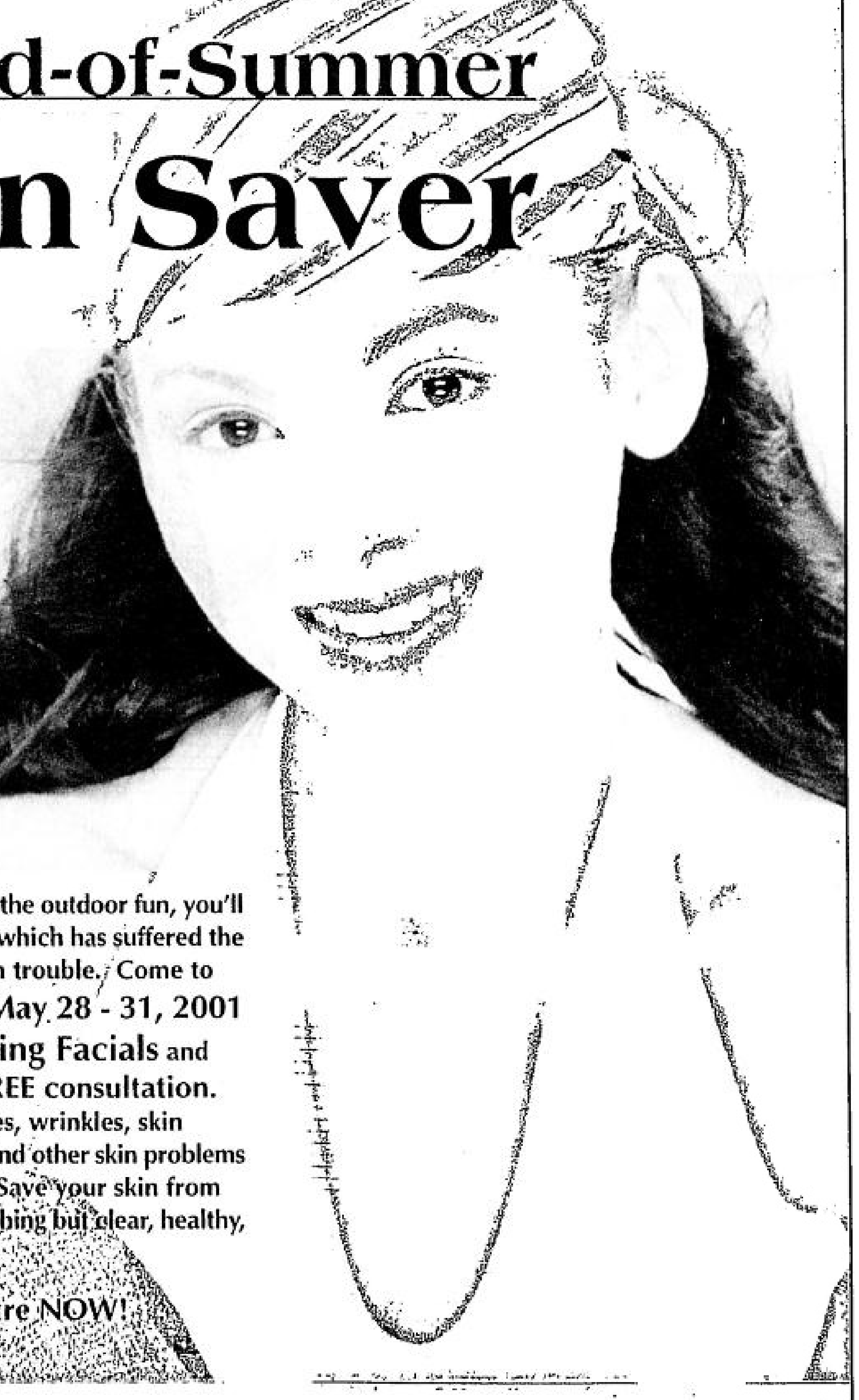

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Meet your MEDICard Team

Dr. Angelica A. Palpal-Latoc was appointed as MEDICard Coordinator in Mary Johnston Hospital in 1997. She is a Medicine graduate of the University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Medical Center and later decided to specialize in Pediatrics. She is married to Dr. Albert Palpal-Latoc who is the Assistant Coordinator of the same hospital. If she's not in the hospital attending to patients, she usually stays at home playing with their three kids. Cooking is also one of her greatest hobbies. If you want to avail of her services, you can visit her at Mary Johnston Hospital. Clinic hours are from Mondays to Saturdays, 8:30 -11:30AM; 4:30-6:00PM.

Dr. Emily Rose A. Castro-Belen has been with MEDICard's Service Team for the past three years. She finished Medicine at the University of Santo Tomas and later chose Obstetrics and Gynecology as her line of specialty. Doc Emily claims that she enjoys her partnership with MEDICard and intends to continue the good working relationship in the next couple of years. She got married recently to Dr. Pocholo Belen and is eager to have a baby soon. For consultations, you can visit her at Medical City Satellite Clinic. Her clinic schedule is M-TH, 1-5 5PM or at the MEDICard Head Office Clinic every Friday, 11AM – 3PM.

Dr. Lorna Luisa Caeg-Vinola is one of MEDICard's pediatricians based in Medical Center Manila. She earned her degree in Medicine at the De La Salle University College of Medicine and later on chose Pediatrics as her line of specialty. She's been with MEDICard for quite a number of years and states that MEDICard's network of patients has contributed a lot to her practice. If you need services of a good pediatrician, you can visit her at Rm. 214 of Medical Center Manila. Her clinic hours are M-W-F-S, 12NN-2PM or by appointment.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. **BE HEARD AND BE READ**. You can write **DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA** at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. HV Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For membership inquiries, please call 810-2399 and look for Ms. Joy Mendiola. **TEXT MEDICard for your queries:** 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. ***Log on to www.medicardphils.com***

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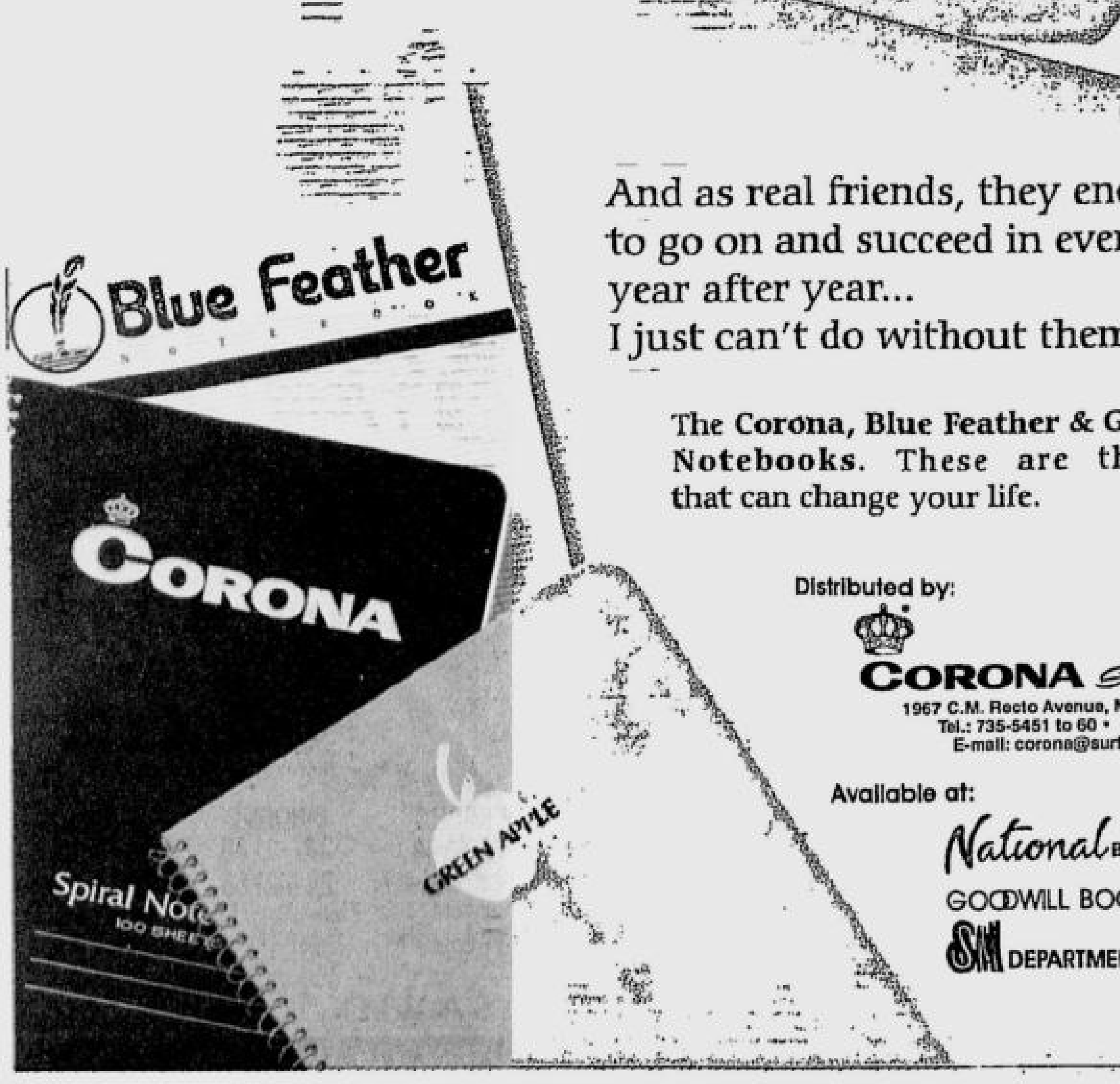

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DON'T trip on that *sarong*! Relay race, Boracay style

Battling on the beach

(From page C1)

when each started barking, "Left! No, straight ahead! *Diretso lang*!" My throat hurt afterward, but it worked as we beat the first team by a few seconds. Our victory was short-lived, though. The next team clocked only 50 seconds. We were goners!

I proceeded to watch the next game anyway—the Relay Walk. Like the Tug of War, it was held in the water. Each player had to wrap a *sarong* around her/his waist, don a cap and grab a beach ball and sand bucket before wading off into waist-deep water. It looked hard as the waves were getting bigger and it was difficult to keep one's balance without dropping the ball and the bucket. But bent on winning, nobody seemed to mind.

The three winning teams moved on to the next round: The banana boat ride. The object was to stay on the boat longest. The winning team would get gift certificates and its members would compete in the finals in the luau the next day.

Anyone who has been on a banana boat would know how big a thrill the ride could be. Unless someone literally steps on your head—twice!—as you struggle to surface for air after falling off the boat.

Winning by sharing

The Pink Team easily won, staying longest on the boat for over 15 seconds. Smart team, indeed, because instead of competing against each other for the P20,000 grand prize, they decided to split it among themselves. But not before one round of the final game: Lick, Shot and Limbo, which meant taking a shot of tequila, answering a 3Com trivia and doing the limbo rock.

The luau, oh, the luau. Those who were "voted off" in the "Survivor" games avenged themselves here and succumbed to the festive mood of the island. Twenty men and women battled it out in the Shotgun Beer-Guzzling contest. Four women outlasted a long line of contestants in the Lick, Shot and Limbo. Everybody stayed awake long enough to join the revelry, I think. Boy, I'm not sure now. But I do remember seeing one pass out... though I'm not very sure of that one either. I was getting pretty... hmmm... woozy myself. Was it my imagination or did 3Com give special awards for Best in Luau Costume, Weirdest Costume, King and Queen of Boracay, Boracay Baywatch Babe? Beats me...

But, yes, I was a contestant on "Survivor," though it was of a different kind. I didn't come home with a million bucks but, hey, I survived—and have I got a million and one memories to keep!

WHO cares about beer bellies? Certainly not these ladies.

SURVIVORS ALL. The winning team with Jun Villanueva, Microwarehouse managing director (extreme left); Kenneth Palacios, 3Com Phils. country manager (back row, third from left), and Cynthia Veloria, Microwarehouse president (fourth from left)

FIRST SCORE Gem Padilla, former Bb. Pilipinas-Universe, poses with coach Mike Athab after getting a medal for being the first to score a goal during the Rexona Ultimate Challenge Series (RUCS) Beach Football game in Subic. Rexona has just kick off the series to encourage the youth to engage in healthy activities such as beach football. Visit its website at www.ultimatechallengeseries.com.

Rx for body and soul

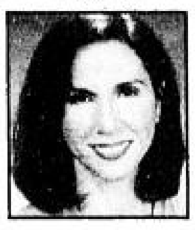
THE LOPEZ Memorial Museum's current exhibit, "RX: Critical Remedies," featuring the works of artists Norberto Roldan and Nona Garcia, focuses on the art of healing and medicine. The museum will conduct a lecture-cum-workshop dubbed "Heal-Om, Eastern and Western Healing Paradigms" on June 1, 3-4 p.m., at the Lopez Memorial Museum, G/F Benpres Building, Exchange Road, Pasig.

The workshop will be conducted by Mariel Francisco and the Pandayang Babaylan. Call Fanny San Pedro at 631-2417.

The many ways you can do strength training

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Aboitiz Juan



IF you want to have a firm, strong, shapely body from now till you grow old and gray, then strength training is the way to go. Strength training or resistance training, as it is also called, is one of the basic components of a complete exercise program (aerobics and stretching are the other two). The older you are, the more important it is for you to do strength training because weak muscles lead to weak bones and poor balance results in unnecessary falls and fractures. Strength training also helps you control your weight because the more muscle mass you have, the more calories you burn.

The most common way to do strength training is by lifting weights. But pumping iron is not the only way to become stronger. Any exercise that you do against resistance can be effective depending on your goals.

Resistance can come in the form of free weights, machines, rubber bands, your own body weight, manual resistance, and from the water around you when you do aqua exercises. None of these forms of resistance are perfect. By knowing the advantages and disadvantages of each form, you can choose the strength-training program or combination of programs that is the most appropriate for you.

Free weights

This usually means dumbbells and barbells but free weights can also take the form of weighted vests or balls, ankle weights or any external weight that you carry with your hands or are strapped to your body or limbs. Free weights are the most popular form of resistance because they are easy to use and are relatively cheap. You can work all the muscles of the body with simple exercises that don't require you to get into complicated positions. You can do many exercise variations with just a few pieces of free weights.

Since you need to "balance" the weights, your weaker side is forced to work as hard as your stronger side (this is truer for dumbbells than it is for barbells). This prevents muscular imbalance from occurring.

However, free weights can be unsafe without proper supervision or exercise know-how. The most common mistake is to lift the weights with fast jerky movements. If you lift heavy weights, you need a spotter for certain exercises. Otherwise, if you experience momentary muscle failure, the weights could come crashing down on you. Some strength training exercises are just not possible with free weights and are best done with machines or rubber bands. Examples are lat pulldowns and seated rows.

Machines

The resistance on machines comes in the form of weight stacks, pressurized air, or springs (like Pilates machines). Machines have an automatic safety feature in that the weights won't fall on you if you get tired. That's why hotel and resort gyms that don't have instructors for their guests prefer to use machines. They have peace of mind that they won't find a guest pinned under a barbell.

Machines also offer the convenience of easy adjustment of resistance unlike free weights wherein you have to get out of your position to change dumbbells or to increase/decrease weight plates on the barbell.

Machines with fixed movement patterns are supposed to ensure correct movement but this is not always true because the machine's movement pattern may not match the natural movement of the body or the machine may not have the necessary adjustments for your particular height and limb length. Fixed movement machines do not require the user to balance the weights. This can be an advantage for people with weak trunk muscles as well as a safety feature for people who need to lift heavy weights. However, these types of machines are bulky and expensive considering that they can only do one kind of movement.

Cable machines are more versatile because they allow more freedom of movement and thus, more exercise variations. However, to use them properly you need a knowledgeable fitness trainer.

Rubber bands

Commercial elastic resistance tools come in the form of rubber bands or tubes. They can be long (3-5 ft) with or without handles or in the shape of single or double rings. You can even use our local substitutes (rubber bands used for slingshots or surgical tubing).

Since they don't weigh much, it is convenient to bring them along when you travel. When you loop rubber bands around a doorknob, the leg of a heavy piece of furniture or a hook on the wall, you can do the same exercises that you can on a cable machine.

Rubber bands are appropriate for people who only need to develop average strength levels. For those who want to get stronger as well as bigger muscles, free weights or machines are more suitable. The other problem with rubber bands is the risk of injury to the wrist joint. Doing rubber band exercises with a bent wrist can cause carpal tunnel syndrome, a painful condition that occurs when strained forearm muscles swell and press on nerves.

Body weight

A push-up is an example of a body weight exercise. So is an abdominal crunch. Parts of your own body act as the resistance so the muscles you are exercising become stronger. Yoga and Pilates done on a mat are some exercise formats that use your own body as the resistance. The advantage of body weight exercises is that you don't need equipment so you can do them anywhere. However, you may need to get into some complicated positions to isolate the muscles you want to work. It can be difficult to vary the resistance of a particular exercise since you can only change the exercise position in so many ways. In fact, the position of the lowest resistance may be too much for beginners.

Finally, there is a limit to how much resistance you can work with since you are relying on your own body weight.

Manual resistance

This is an interesting type of strength training program that requires very little or no equipment (sometimes a rope, towel, or pole is used) but involves two people—a lifter and a spotter. The lifter performs the exercise while the spotter provides the resistance by applying pressure with his or her arms. Here's an example when performing a shoulder lateral raise. The spotter stands behind the lifter and places his hands on the lifter's forearms. As the lifter raises his arms sideways, the spotter applies a downward pressure while still allowing the lifter the freedom to lift the arms. In the final position, the spotter applies additional pressure. Some advantages of this system are that the spotter can control the speed, form and technique of the lifter, and more pressure can be applied in positions where the muscle is the strongest while less pressure is applied where the muscle is the weakest. The disadvantage is that you need two people. Both need to be trained in their alternating roles as lifter and spotter for this to be a time-efficient workout. Also, they should have similar strength levels.

Aqua

If you have ever tried to walk in shallow water, you know what kind of resistance water can provide against your legs. The advantage of water exercises is that the resistance is all around you, the water makes you feel weightless even if you are very overweight, and you always feel cool. As you get stronger, you can increase the resistance by using special aqua exercise equipment that create a dragging effect as you move against the water. The biggest disadvantage of aqua strength training is that you need a swimming pool to perform the exercises. It is difficult for the instructor to see what you are doing underwater to properly correct your technique. Unless you exercise in an indoor pool or you do it at night, skin damage from constant exposure to the sun can be an issue you need to seriously consider.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Pull-down with rubber band

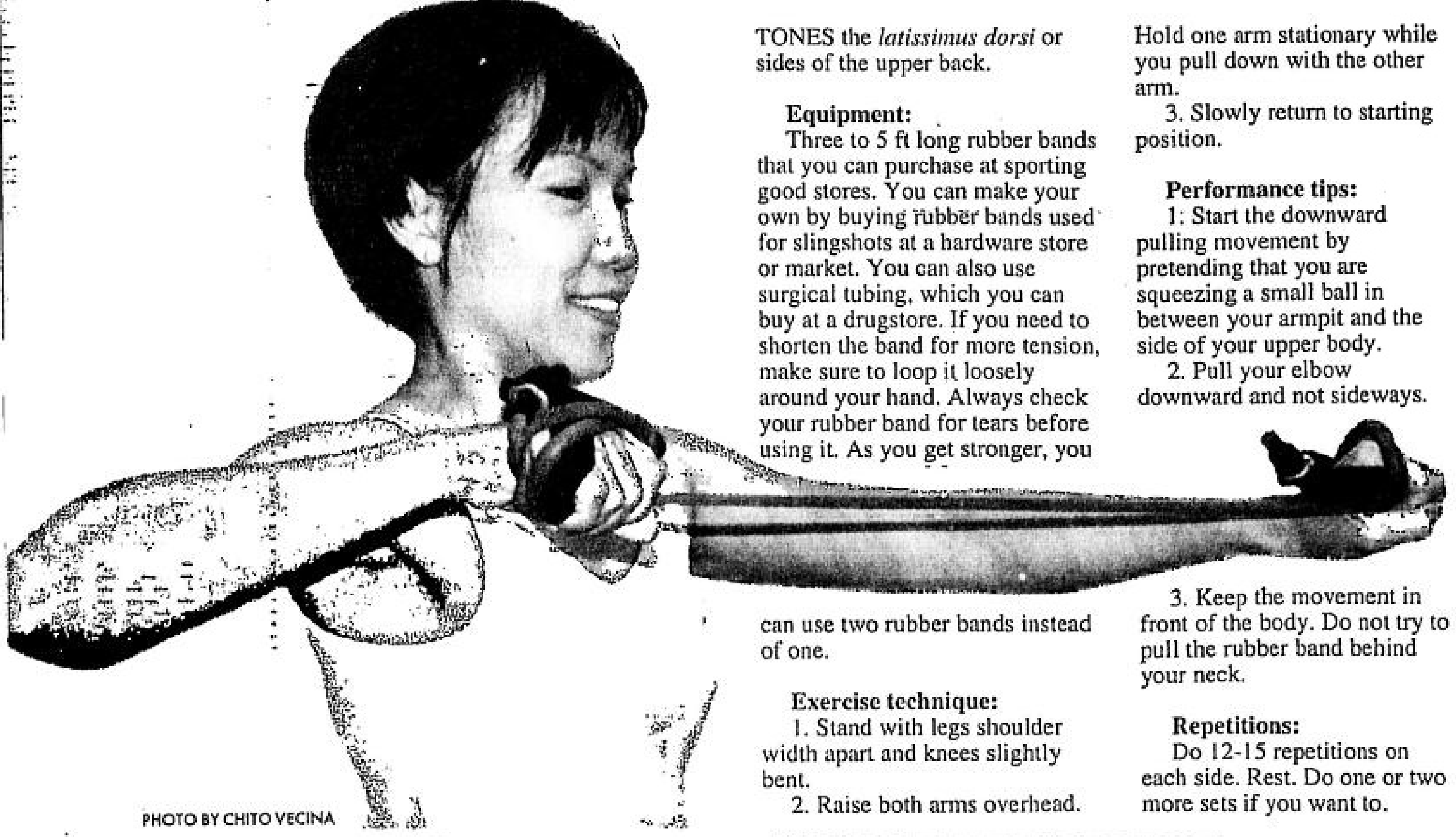


PHOTO BY CHITO VECINA

TONES the *latissimus dorsi* or sides of the upper back.

Equipment:

Three to 5 ft long rubber bands that you can purchase at sporting good stores. You can make your own by buying rubber bands used for slingshots at a hardware store or market. You can also use surgical tubing, which you can buy at a drugstore. If you need to shorten the band for more tension, make sure to loop it loosely around your hand. Always check your rubber band for tears before using it. As you get stronger, you can use two rubber bands instead of one.

Exercise technique:

1. Stand with legs shoulder width apart and knees slightly bent.
2. Raise both arms overhead. Hold one arm stationary while you pull down with the other arm.
3. Slowly return to starting position.

Performance tips:

1: Start the downward pulling movement by pretending that you are squeezing a small ball in between your armpit and the side of your upper body.

2. Pull your elbow downward and not sideways.

3. Keep the movement in front of the body. Do not try to pull the rubber band behind your neck.

Repetitions:

Do 12-15 repetitions on each side. Rest. Do one or two more sets if you want to.

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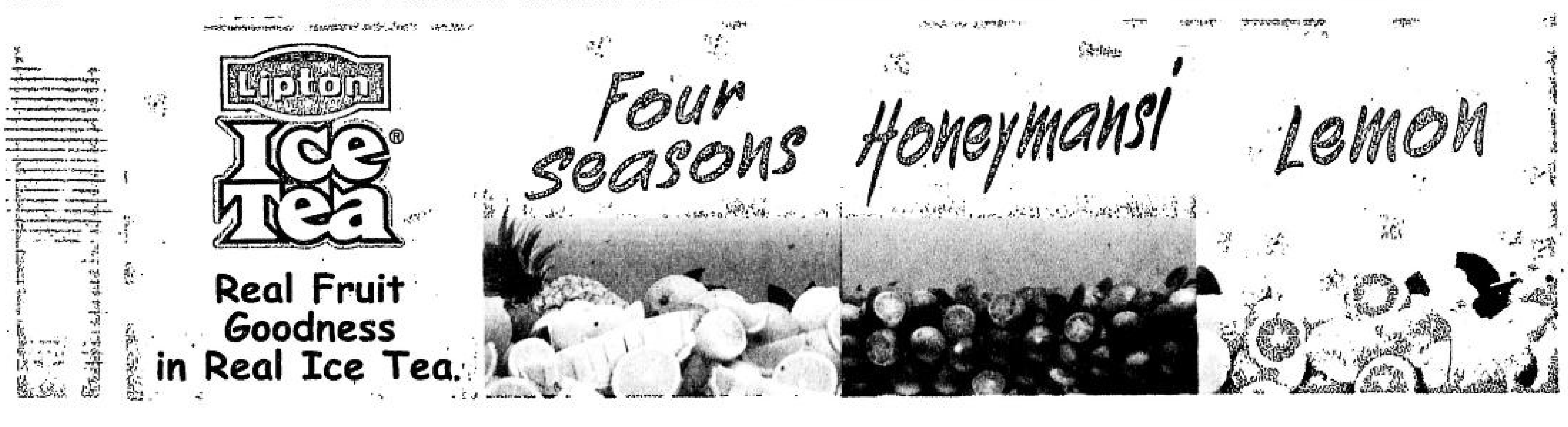

Readers react to column on 'Erap and the Filipino mentality'

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

I WAS surprised at the overwhelming and immediate response of readers from various parts of the world to my column of May 22 about Erap and the Filipino mentality. Most of them expressed support for my views, adding their own insights in the process; one reader wrote and two others phoned me correcting what I said about Barabbas; a Filipino in Canada asked permission to reprint my column; and another completely disagreed with me. Here are excerpts from selected e-mails that came in:

Your column reminded me of my encounter with a 60-year-old Filipino in a barber shop in San Diego, California, who said that the only way we can build a new Filipino is to "nuke" the Philippines and start a new race.—**Bokvictoria@aol.com**

You have grossly underestimated the problem(s) in the Philippines, although you have, by any measure, brought this awareness closer to its naked form.

I am a former banker and have lived and worked in several countries over the years, including almost two years in the Philippines during the early '90s. My wife, incidentally, is a Filipina. Over the years, I continue to monitor reports on the Philippines very closely.

I have always enjoyed the challenge of learning and living with foreign cultures etc... but when it came to the Philippines, the experience can best be described as simply... tragic. I thought I'd "seen it all" but the falsehoods, deceit, lies, racism, melodrama, ineptitude, incompetence, etc., [go] beyond definition, both from a personal point of view and also my observations and reading of events transpiring through recent Philippine history.—**Gul Chotrani <gbc@pacific. net.sq>**

I think it is not correct to characterize Filipinos as you have written in your column. The Philippines is not the only country that is in a similar situation. In fact, some are even worse. I am not saying that we should be happy that there are others, too. I'm just trying to point out the similarities so that we can be more scientific in analyzing the real cause of these problems.

Your column defines "crab mentality" as something that is almost unique to Filipinos. Crab mentality is, in fact, a result of envy. Every human being has envy and envy is not bad, it is an emotion that drives us to try and achieve what others have. It is a driving force for us to compete.

Erap is not every Filipino. Again, I have to disagree with you. I believe that many of those who joined Edsa II denounce that character of Erap and it is one of the reasons they are there, and why I was there.

When you see a movie, unconsciously, you see yourself part of the story and most of the time the lead actor. That's what makes us appreciate the movie. When we go back to our busy lives after the scenes, the story becomes just part of our memories. To many people, the masses who are not living a very comfortable life, they tend to continue fantasizing about the happy endings, dreaming that someday their lives will end up as it ended in the move. Poverty, lack of education and having nothing to do developed in them extreme admiration for these actors, not because he represents what every Filipino unconsciously wants to be.—**Teddy M. Pulayan <teddy_pulayan@csb.com.ph>**

I would like to ask for your permission to reprint your PDI article, "Estrada represents what every Filipino unconsciously wants to be" on my website, www.serbisyong pinoy.com.

I am based in Toronto, Canada and would like to share your article with our *kababayans* here. I believe your article is so correct that it even applies to Filipinos here in Canada.—**Camilo Bolinas <cbolinasf@sympatico.com>**

I'm a Filipino woman who has been living in Australia for 3½ years. The first thing I do in the morning is read your newspaper's Internet version. I feel your article is just so true on the Filipino mentality and it is much easier to read this article more objectively when you are looking at it from outside the country.

Also I feel if it were not for your newspaper, Estrada would still be robbing the country blind. Keep up the good work.—**Prechie Bugtong <golfland@ircnet.com.au>**

I've been following your column since the day I found the INQUIRER in the Philippines. The column you wrote about what Filipinos truly are is, painfully as it is, quite true. It's a big shame every time foreigners ask me about my nationality and why I am here in the US. I think what we Filipinos need is to be true to ourselves. Acceptance of reality is one big leap toward self-improvement. Kudos to you, Mr. Licauco!—**Sheila Opina, MI, USA <lloydo@umich.edu>**

Address letters to this column to Room 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or e-mail jlicauco@geocities.com. Visit www.angelfire.com/journal/licauco. Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday at 6-8 p.m.

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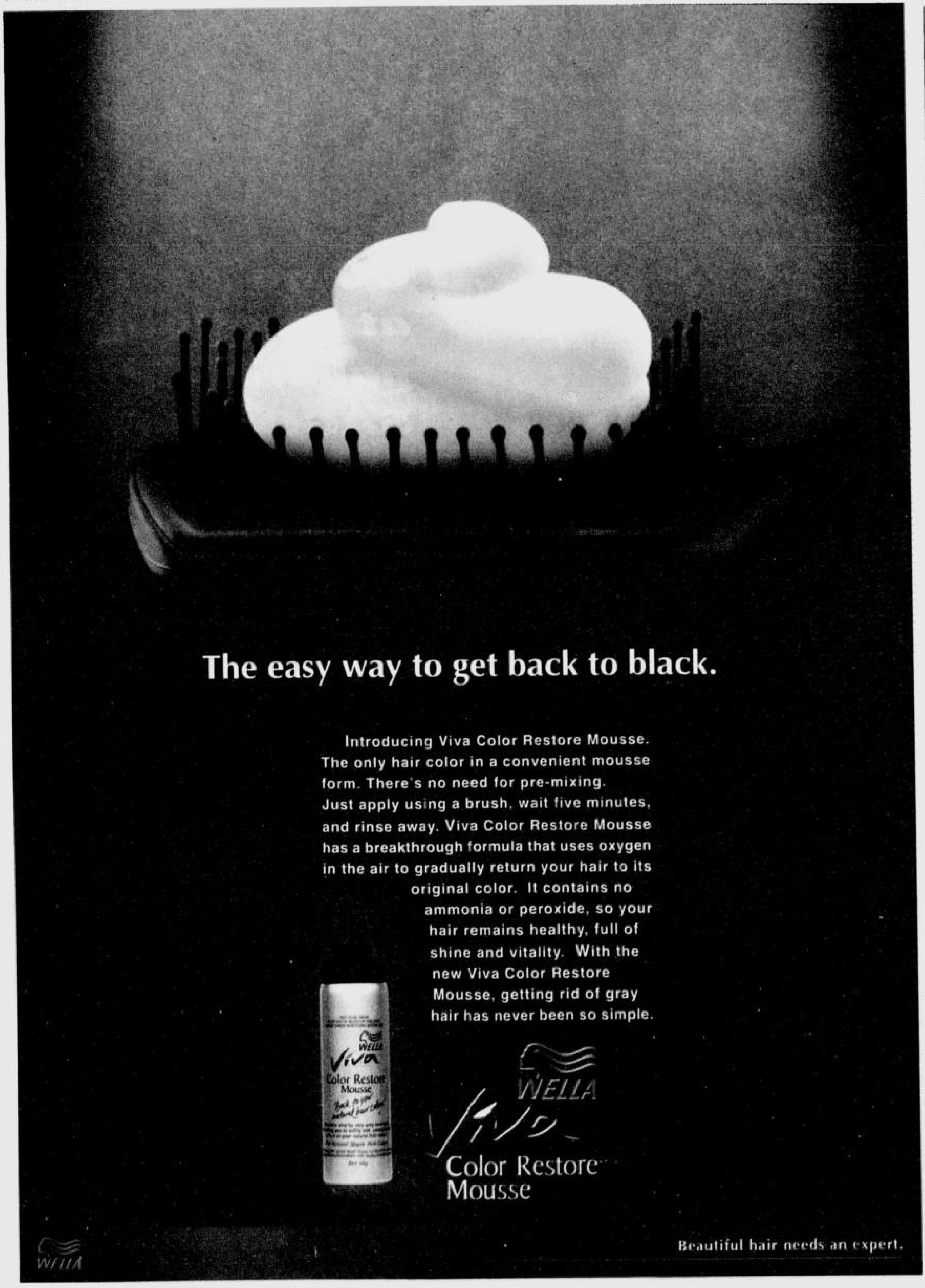

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